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ABSTRACT

This study is a background paper aiming to provide a review of current practice in the assessment of students in further education who have special educational needs, in particular those students with moderate learning difficulties. The study examines the content, method, and aims of assessment and its relationship to the course curriculum. It also examines the role of staff carrying out assessment and looks at their attitudes and opinions. These issues are surveyed over 64 separate courses at 40 colleges of further education, with case studies at 4 colleges providing more detailed descriptions of the problems faced in assessing students with special educational needs. The report also provides guidelines for the development of assessment procedures for this group of students, related to the development of the curriculum. A discussion of recent literature relevant to the subject sets the context of the study. Assessment forms are included in the document. (KC)

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Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit

ED229537

A Special Needs Document

Making progress?

The function of assessment for students with moderate learning difficulties

J.E. Roberts, B. Norwich and K. Wedell

University of London Institute of Education

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Dear Sir/Madam

MAKING PROGRESS?

I enclose a copy of the above publication. It is the report of a study carried out at our request by the University of London Institute of Education, under the direction of Professor Klaus Wedell. The document reviews current practice in the assessment of students with moderate learning difficulties. As such it follows up one of the areas of work identified in an earlier FEU review* carried out by the NFER.

This document surveys the practices in many of the FE colleges concerned with this area of work, using a postal survey and a smaller number of detailed case studies. It explores the strategies used for selecting students, for assessing in-course progress and for end-of-course competence. In so doing it inevitably comments on the curriculum, identifies the heavy demands made on staff in assessing these students and exposes inadequacies of expertise and a need for more support and time to be made available for the assessment function. The obvious suitability of profiling appears in many sections of the document.

In its concluding discussion the report indicates that much needs to be done if we are to expand and improve provision in this area. More contact between schools, colleges, parents and the various agencies will obviously enrich pre-course assessment. A sharper relationship between curricular objectives and assessment will obviously aid the counselling process - both during and at the end of the courses. More guidance and support will obviously aid the teachers.

LEAs and colleges intending to do more work for students with special needs should find this document and its case studies especially valuable. For other readers it could provide a useful review of assessment in action.

Yours faithfully

Jack Mansell

JACK MANSELL
Director

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* Students with Special Needs in FE - A review of research relating to young people in the 14-19 age range with special educational needs. FEU October 1981

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1 Introduction

1.1 Outline of the Study

This study is a background paper aiming to provide a review of current practice in the assessment of students in further education who have special educational needs, in particular those students with moderate learning difficulties. The report also provides case-study examples of assessment practice and suggests guidelines for the development of assessment procedures for this group of students, related to the development of the curriculum. A discussion of recent literature relevant to the subject matter of the study is included.

This research project was carried out at the London University Institute of Education under a commission from the Further Education Curriculum Review & Development Unit (FEU) from October, 1981 to April, 1982.

1.2 Background to the Study

This project is one of a group being developed as a result of recommendations made in the review of research *Students with special needs in further education* commissioned from the National Foundation for Educational Research and published in Autumn, 1981 (Bradley and Hegarty, 1981). The comment made by this review that "assessment represents a particularly crucial issue in the education of young people with special needs" and its conclusion that "there is a clear need for an examination of current practice, relating it to actual needs and facilities so that practical guidelines might be given to colleges" influenced the Special Needs Study Group of the FEU in its decision to commission the present study on assessment.

Assessment is an issue which bears a close relationship to two other areas of concern for the FEU Study Group: curriculum development, and provision for young people with special educational needs. In view of this it was felt that a study on assessment would provide a useful and complementary addition to the FEU's programme of research.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The general aims of this study are as follows:

(i) to review current practice in the assessment of students in colleges of further education who have special educational needs, in particular students with moderate learning difficulties.

(ii) to provide some case-study examples of assessment practice.

(iii) to suggest guidelines for the future development of assessment practice, related to the development of the curriculum for this group of students.

(iv) to provide a review of recent literature relevant to the subject matter of the study.

1.4 Target Group

This study is principally concerned with students with moderate learning difficulties (ESN(M)), defined in our survey as those students without any formal qualifications and/or who attended a special school, for whom the college has felt it necessary to make special, but not necessarily segregated, arrangements on account of their learning difficulties.

1.5 Coverage

In this study we have aimed to consider assessment procedures used at entry to, during the course of, and on completion of further education. At each of these stages, the study examines the content, method and aims of assessment and its relationship to the course curriculum. It also examines the role of staff carrying out assessment and looks at their attitudes and opinions. The above issues are surveyed over 64 separate courses at 40 colleges of further education, with case-studies at 4 colleges providing more detailed description of the problems faced in assessing students with special educational needs. This is followed by discussion of some fundamental issues underlying the use of assessment procedures. We conclude with some suggested guidelines for tutors; in attempting to formulate these we have tried to take into consideration both the need for some comparable forms of assessment, and the individuality of each college and group of students. It is hoped that our review of relevant literature will help to set the study in context, and that the study will make a constructive contribution to practice.

II Procedure

2.1 Literature Review

In order to set the study in context and to provide sources of further reading for those interested, a literature review of the topic area to be covered by the study was undertaken. Both manual and computer searches of relevant journal literature were carried out; sources consulted included the British Education Index, ERIC and Psychological Abstracts. In addition, book material was surveyed through library catalogue searches and consultation of the bibliographies attached to recent, related studies (e.g. Bradley and Hegarty, 1981). As will be discussed in Section III, almost no literature specifically directed towards the assessment of students with moderate learning difficulties in further education was discovered in this country. However, it was decided to review a selection of material on some closely related topics, including the assessment of other groups of students with special needs; assessment of ordinary students; assessment of school-age children with special needs; specific techniques of assessment such as profiling; the relationship between assessment and the curriculum; staff training and development; and wider educational issues affecting the 16–19 group. These will be more fully described in Section III. Since there is a large body of literature concerned with each of these related topics, our review makes no claim to be exhaustive, but aims to indicate some issues of importance which may be followed up by the reader according to his or her own interests.

In addition to the journal and book searches, the Times Educational Supplement was monitored for relevant articles throughout the study.

2.2 Selection of Colleges

Owing to the restricted scale of the study, it was found to be impractical to carry out our original plan to circulate a questionnaire to all colleges of further education in England and Wales. Instead, with the assistance of the FEU and through consultation of current educational directories, a selected list was compiled of 54 colleges known or thought to be admitting students in our target group to one of more of their courses. A list of the colleges contacted (not all of whom subsequently participated in the survey) is attached in Appendix 1.

2.3 Design and Mailing of Questionnaire

A questionnaire on current assessment practice, to be completed by course tutors responsible for courses admitting students in our target group, was designed and tested in a small pilot study. In November 1981 the final version, a copy of which is attached in Appendix 2, was circulated to the 54 colleges selected for our survey.

Each questionnaire was designed to provide information about one *course*, rather than one college, and was to be completed by the course tutor in charge of that course. Thus, each college would return one form or more depending upon the number of relevant courses on offer. In some cases, the same course tutor might be responsible for a number of courses, and might have to complete several questionnaires, but it was generally found that tutors were most co-operative on this matter. The rationale behind our request for one questionnaire per course, rather than one questionnaire per college, lay in the very different kinds of assessment that might be used on different courses, even within the same college. The relationship between the type of course (for instance, Work Introduction or General Education) and type of assessment used was felt to be of particular interest for our report. Five questionnaires, enough to cover as many relevant courses as any one college might offer, were sent to each college. Attached to each questionnaire was a covering letter addressed to the course tutor, while a covering letter was sent with each batch to the Principal of the college, requesting permission to conduct the survey and asking for the questionnaires to be passed on to the relevant members of staff or Head of Department. A reply-paid postcard was included on which the names of staff members to whom the questionnnaire had been circulated could be filled in, so that we would know fairly quickly whether a particular college would participate in our survey, and which tutors would be returning the questionnaires. Copies of the covering letters and postcard appear in Appendix 3.

The questionnaire is divided into four sections. Section 1 records basic information about the college and the course tutor, together with details of the number and type of courses offered by the college which admit students with moderate learning difficulties. Section 2 focuses on the particular course to which that questionnaire relates, and records details such as its average length, number of tutors involved, and the number, age-

range, sex and educational background of the students. Section 3 moves on to assessment, and is sub-divided into three sections on pre-course, during course and end-of-course assessment. Within each section are questions concerning the content, method and aims of assessment, the personnel involved in assessment and decision- making, and the views of the respondent on the success and/or shortcomings of the methods used. Finally, Section 4 covers the issues of staff training and qualifications, inviting the respondent's view on how his or her training in assessment techniques might be improved.

2.4 Response to Survey

From the 54 colleges circulated in our survey, 48 replies were received. Of these, 3 colleges declined to participate, while 45 agreed to complete the questionnaires. In all, 74 questionnaires were received from 45 colleges. Of these, 2 questionnaires were excluded on grounds of pertaining to courses admitting no students with moderate learning difficulties and 8 arrived after our extended deadline for computerizing the data (March 1st, 1982). Therefore the total number of questionnaires included in our report is 64, relating to 64 separate courses admitting students in our target group in 40 colleges up and down the country. The quality of replies received was good, and many respondents expressed an interest in the project and in assessment generally.

2.5 Analysis of Survey Data

The questionnaire data were coded, punched onto cards and analysed on the computer using the SPSS package to yield frequency counts of responses to each question, and cross-tabulations between one variable and another. (For example, a cross-tabulation could be performed between the variables "Course Title" and "Pre-Entry Assessment Procedures" to illustrate the different patterns of assessment occurring in the context of Work Introduction, General Education or Combined courses.) The total number of possible cross-tabulations was so great that only those felt to be of particular interest were requested from the computer, but the data remain coded and accessible to further analysis in the future if required. Besides this quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis of tutors' comments was undertaken, and the points raised incorporated into our discussion below.

2.6 Case Studies

In order to study some aspects of assessment in greater detail than could be obtained from the postal survey, four case-studies of selected colleges were carried out. The colleges were selected on the basis of their particular interest in our target group of students and/or their use of interesting or unusual methods of assessment. Owing to the restricted scope of the study it was not possible to visit more than 4 colleges, although there were others which we felt would have held equal interest.

Structured interviews were held with course tutors at the case-study colleges in order to discuss in greater depth issues raised by our questionnaire. A copy of the interview schedule is attached in Appendix 4. However, since a great deal of time was needed with each tutor to cover all these issues, and since the areas of particular importance varied from college to college, the interview schedule was not followed rigidly. It was intended primarily to provide a framework for tutors to express their opinions in a more open-ended way than allowed by the questionnaire, and for discussion of issues of particular relevance to the college in question.

2.7 Other Information Gathering

To obtain relevant background information for the study, interviews were held with an ILEA Specialist Education Inspector concerned with moderate and severe learning difficulties at County Hall, London; with the National Bureau for Handicapped Students; and with a specialist careers officer (London Borough of Barnet). The role of the specialist careers officer emerged as a particularly important one in our study (see following sections). In addition, two conferences on students with special needs in further education were attended, one at Coombe Lodge, the other at the King's Fund Centre, London.

III Literature Review

3.1 The Context of the Assessent of Students with Special needs in F.E.

In order to consider assessment, it is important to examine the context in which it occurs, and the changes which are taking place.

3.1.1 *The Nature of the Target Group*

The social and educational competences of the target group in our study obviously cover a wide range. It was often said of the young people in the ESN(M) category that many of them managed quite well after leaving school, because their difficulties lay mainly in the area of *academic* competence. This reflected a situation where education was focused on 'academics'. Chapter 10 of the Warnock Report (1978) strongly recommended that schools should provide leavers' courses directed at equipping students with relevant competences. Bradley and Hegarty (1982) found that the development of such courses was one of the main areas of advance in curriculum planning. Jackson (1977) warned of the need to consider carefully how such courses should be mounted, in order for the students to obtain benefit from them.

3.1.2 *Prospects for Employment*

As school-leavers' courses improve, so one would expect a larger proportion of the target group to achieve employment on leaving school. However, the drastic fall in employment opportunities has raised the threshold of job requirements. Our target group thus merges with the large group of unemployed youngsters who fall below these higher requirement levels.

3.1.3 *Changing Concept of Post-school Education*

Research in special education indicates that young people with special needs are unlikely to have reached their learning ceiling by the time they are of school leaving age (cf. Gunzberg, 1975). The Warnock Report thus strongly urged the provision of educational resources for those over 16.

The unemployment problems mentioned in 3.1.2 above urged the provision of educational resources for young people with low educational achievement and/or social competence to raise their chances in the employment market (Manpower Services Commission, 1977). The Department of Education and Science issued a circular on this (DES, 1977).

With the shrinking number of job openings available, a substantial proportion of young people are still not likely to find employment and to achieve financial independence. For some, the goal of further education thus becomes "significant living without employment".

In this context, a bewildering array of provision for school leavers has been developed. Bradley and Hegarty (1982) refer to this confusing situation presented by the number of courses of different kinds which have been developed both within education and also by non-educational funding. They provide a diagram of the various forms of provision available (Fig. 1, page 6).

In 1981 the Department of Employment (DOE, 1981) issued a statement on a New Training Initiative for all young people leaving school who were not otherwise covered, but at the time of writing the principles for establishing this provision were still being debated.

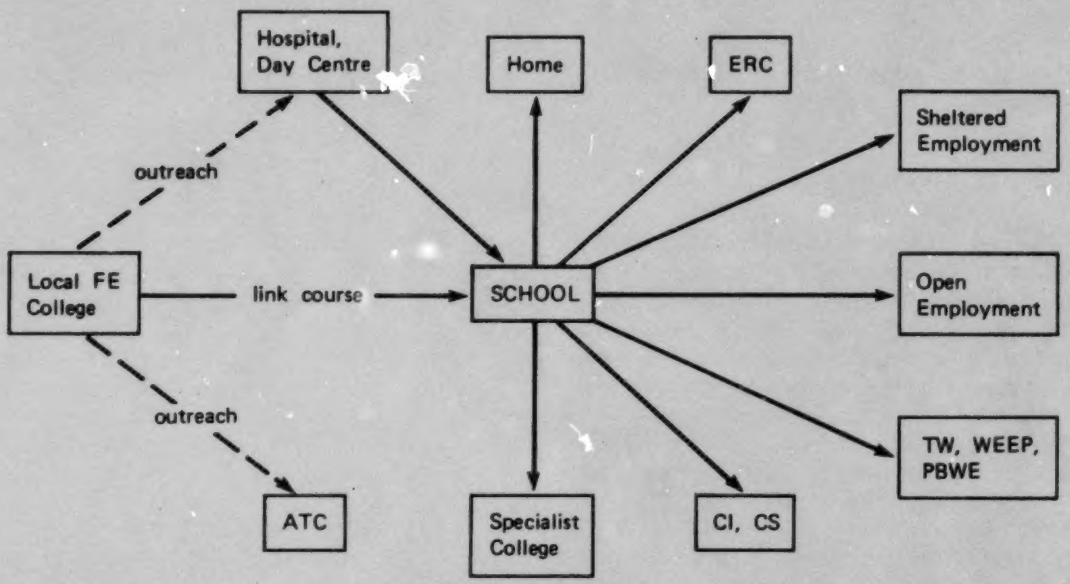
The simple distinctions between education at school, post-school vocational education, and various other forms of further education have thus become blurred. The Warnock report also emphasised the need for day-release educational provision for *employed* young people to be extended in its aims—a point made earlier by the Crowther Committee (quoted in Cantor and Roberts, 1979).

3.1.4 *The Function of Assessment: Transition from School*

The wider availability of a range of post-school education has produced—at least potentially—a greater scope for continuity of education before and after the upper age limit of compulsory schooling. An individual young person's progression from school thus becomes less a selection 'hurdle', and there is much more a need for guidance based on a sensitive evaluation across a range of relevant achievement, personality and other dimensions.

The Warnock Report stresses the crucial nature of the transition from school, and proposes that the 'named person' for this stage of a young person's life should be the careers, or specialist careers officer. Walker (1980)

Fig. 1. Main opportunities for school leavers with special needs* (Bradley and Hegarty, 1982)



Note: The figure provides an indication of the *main* types of provision for school leavers with special needs. In addition, individuals in employment or taking part in YOP schemes may attend college on a part-time basis or may take advantage of the variety of adult education opportunities.

paradoxically found that, in fact, the proportion of young people with special needs who talked to careers officers about their decision to leave school was considerably smaller than the proportion of those without special needs. Obviously, the increasing profusion of alternative choices makes the need for expert advice greater than ever.

The Warnock Report also refers to the range of information—medical, psychological and social—which is relevant to a young person's choices at this stage. Bradley and Hegarty (1982) point to the absence of procedures for exchange of information between schools and colleges relevant to these various aspects of a young person, and they also refer to the need for parents to be included in consultation. They give an example of one college which does arrange meetings with parents.

The Warnock Report commends the establishment of 'link' courses between schools and colleges of further education, and also of work preparation courses. Both of these arrangements provide opportunities for establishing a continuity between school and post-school stages, which allow young people, and those concerned with guiding them, to arrive at decisions about appropriate forms of post-school progression for them. As such, these types of provision make possible a form of sampling of the young person's achievement, attitudes and other relevant aspects, which are likely to have a greater predictive validity than other less direct forms of assessment. Brolin and d'Alonzo (1979) quote research indicating that the dimensions relevant to the prediction of vocational success are now generally established. Irrespective of this, it seems clear that it would be better to reduce reliance on more tenuous forms of predictive assessment where possible, through existing means of establishing

*Key to abbreviations in diagram above: ERC: Employment Rehabilitation Centre; TW: Training Workshop; WEEP: Work Experience on Employers' Premises; PBWE: Project Based Work Experience; CI: Community Industry; CS: Community Service; ATC: Adult Training Centre.

continuity between a young person's school and post-school stages. This point is also stressed by Whelan and Speake (1979) and Browne (1978).

3.2 General issues in Assessment

Before reviewing literature about assessment in relation to the curriculum in secondary, further and special education, certain general issues about assessment require clarification. In broad terms, assessment can be used (1) in the assessment of individuals for counselling and instructional decisions, (2) in curriculum evaluation, and (3) as a catalyst for instructional improvement (Popham, 1981). These uses relate to two broad assessment orientations: (1) status determination in which an individual's status is assessed with respect to others' performance (norm referenced assessment), and (2) instructional improvement in which an individual's status is assessed with respect to a defined objective (criterion referenced assessment).

Following Popham, norm referenced approaches are considered relevant to (1) fixed quota selection decisions, (2) large-scale resource allocation decisions and (3) individual counselling in which the critical question is "how capable is the person in relation to others?". By contrast, criterion referenced approaches are considered relevant to (1) the assessment of requisite skills, (2) curriculum evaluation, (3) curriculum design and diagnosis and (4) individual counselling in which the critical question is "does this person possess the required characteristics?" What is required of an assessment technique depends partly on the assessment orientation. For example, criterion referenced tests require more detailed description of the content to be assessed than do norm referenced tests. Whatever the assessment orientation, however, the following factors are considered important in the construction and selection of assessment techniques: (1) description of behaviour or characteristic to be assessed, (2) number of items for each behaviour or characteristic to be assessed, (3) scope of assessment, (4) reliability of assessment, e.g. the consistency of assessment between different assessors and over time, (5) validity of assessment, i.e. what interpretation can be given to the results of assessment, (6) comparative data in the form of norms for norm referenced approaches, (7) ease of administration.

3.3 The Role of Assessment in Relation to the Curriculum

Much attention has recently been focused upon curriculum development in further education, with emphasis upon the generation and attainment of teaching and learning objectives. Agencies such as the Technician Education Council, the Business Education Council and the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work have all adopted this model in the design of further education courses. In the case of courses for young people with special educational needs, it is recognized that courses will often require individual design or modification. A recent FEU document (*Skills for Living*, 1982b) offers a flexible framework for a curriculum which can be applied to students with moderate learning difficulties in the transitional phase between school and adult life.

In the widest sense, the overriding curricular aim of any F.E. course for young people at this transitional stage will be "preparation for adult life". However, the course curriculum will place emphasis upon different aspects of adult life, depending upon a variety of factors such as the structure and funding of the course, the resources and facilities available, demand from students, and local work and leisure opportunities. Thus, the curriculum may be biased towards vocational training, towards the development of "life and social skills", or towards preparation for "significant living without employment". However, in the vast majority of cases, a course curriculum will not focus exclusively upon any one of these areas. For example, a large number of courses surveyed in our study fall under the heading of "Work Introduction" or "Work Preparation", but as Bradley and Hegarty (1982) have noted in their study of F.E. provision for students with special needs, such courses are not, in practice, solely restricted to "specific trade training", but necessarily take into account "a wider concept of vocational preparation in which social skills have an important place in the curriculum".

Whatever the content of the curriculum, however, the same basic principles will apply: essential to curricular planning are "carefully worked-out objectives, relevant teaching methods and relevant assessment tools" (Powell, 1979). The role of assessment in the course curriculum is vital, and the literature suggests that it serves a number of purposes. Besides the more obvious purpose of allowing tutors to assess student progress and perhaps

offer information to prospective employers, to parents and to other tutors, it allows evaluation of the efficacy of the course curriculum and teaching strategies in achieving stated aims and objectives. It also offers the student a chance to receive feedback on his or her own progress.

The FEU publication *Vocational Preparation* (1981) identifies assessment as one of the four curriculum themes: basic skills; relevance and experience; counselling, guidance and assessment; and negotiation—as a basis for curriculum design. The FEU document on the curriculum for young people with special educational needs (FEU 1982b) suggests that ". . . careful assessment before, during and at the end of a course should be included. Pre-course assessment will ensure appropriate target-setting; continuous assessment during the course will ensure appropriate modification to these targets; and end-of-course assessments will both show what progress has been achieved, and produce a report for the next stage."

Powell (1979) has attempted to show how assessment forms a vital link in the chain of the curriculum process, as illustrated below (Fig 2).

With reference to this diagram, Powell suggests that a course of studies is intended to help pupils acquire knowledge, skills and certain attitudes, while assessment should be related to whether these objectives have been attained. At stage 1, generalized aims are translated into more specific objectives, relating to knowledge, skill, awareness and attitude. At stage 2, content and teaching methods are specifically related to the achievements of the stated objectives. At stage 3, Powell claims that "informal feedback" from students will indicate whether objectives are being achieved, and will pave the way for stage 4—the assessment of students, and of the content and teaching methods of the course. An important point is the choice of suitable assessment techniques for each objective—for example, a practical test or a profile record. Finally, the feedback received from the assessment process will help staff to redefine their teaching and learning objectives which will in turn suggest changes in the content and teaching methods of the course, for the next week, month or year (depending upon how frequently they work through the "cycle" above); thus the whole process begins again.

The extent to which assessment has not been incorporated fully into the curriculum process in the school education of slow learners is noted in Brennan (1979). It was found that there was much general impressionistic assessment, often insightful, but tending to overlook specific facets of behaviour. The young person's progress was often described as satisfactory without relating such assessment to curricular objectives. Brennan emphasises the value of specific curricular objectives in facilitating the design of assessment methods, e.g. record design, and in indicating the detailed content for assessment. These points are developed in the model advocated by Ainscow

Fig. 2. The Curriculum Process. Powell, 1979 (modified version of model proposed by Wheeler, 1967).

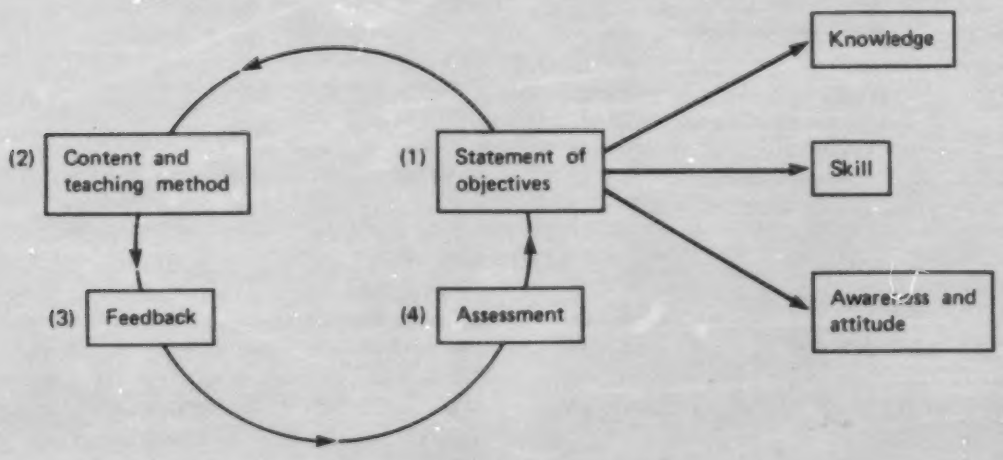
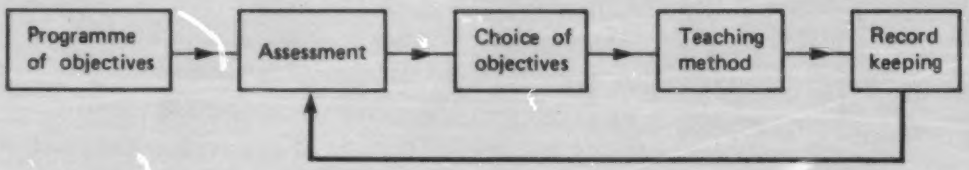


Fig. 3. A basic teaching model. Ainscow and Tweddle. (1979)



and Tweddle (1979) who propose a teaching model with assessment as an inextricable part of the teaching process in which mastery of performance based objectives is relevant (Fig. 3).

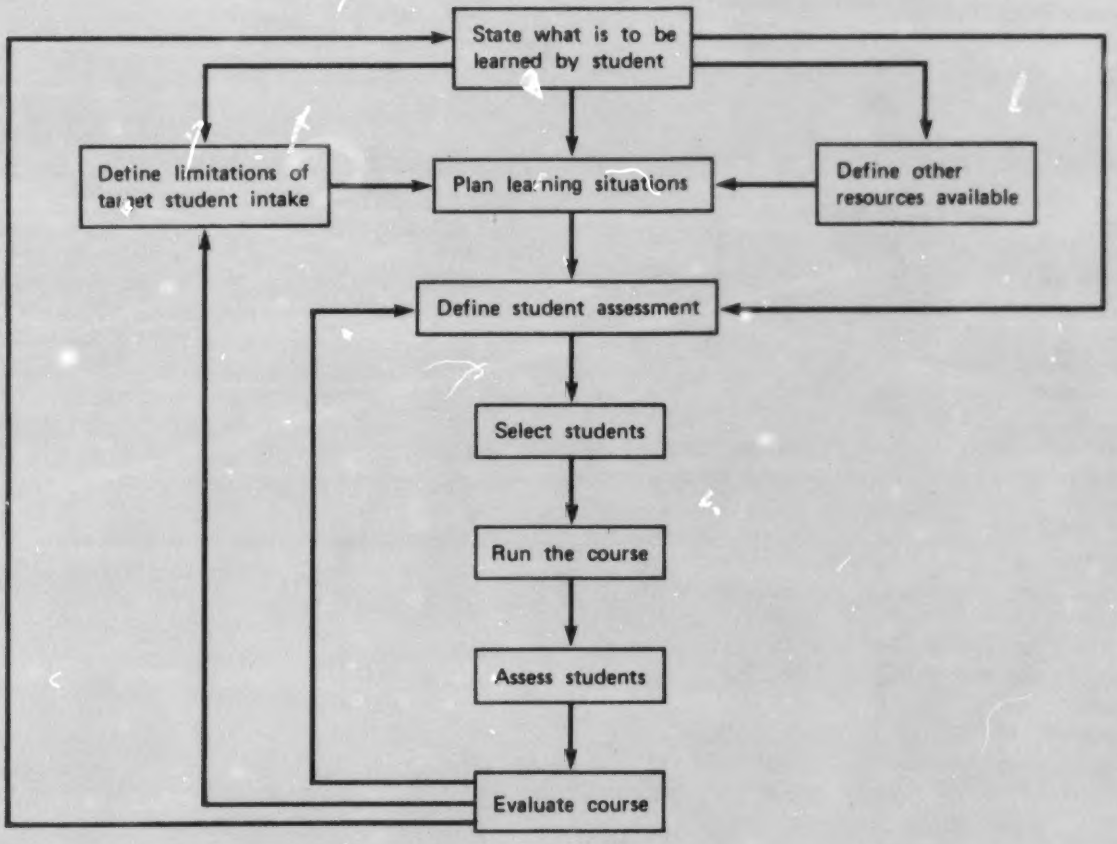
In this model, assessment is in terms of the programme of objectives and leads to the choice of appropriate objectives for the learner. Choosing explicit objectives is considered to be essential before consideration of teaching methods. Ainscow and Tweddle recommend that the child be aware of his learning objectives. Record keeping provides the basis for ongoing assessment of progress in relation to objectives and enables the teacher to make decisions about changes in teaching method and choice of appropriate objectives. Record keeping should, according to Ainscow and Tweddle, be realistic for classroom use but provide precise information about the learner's progress.

Russell and Latcham (1979) describe the process of curriculum development as posing three interlocking questions, stressing that these cannot be considered as separate issues: (a) what do we want the students to learn? (b) how can we get them to learn it? (c) how will we know when they have done so? Here, too, it is clear that assessment is inextricably linked to the rest of the process of curriculum development, and again serves a dual purpose in monitoring student progress and, simultaneously, offering an opportunity to evaluate the course curriculum. This is illustrated by Russell & Latcham's "logical procedure for course development" (Fig. 4, p. 10).

This diagram clearly indicates how learning objectives help to define the use of assessment, which itself provides the material for course evaluation which leads to the redefinition of learning objectives once again. In this case, the role of assessment in the selection procedure is also illustrated, indicating that precise objectives and well-planned evaluation can define the limitations of the target student intake. As in the case of Powell's adaptation of Wheeler's model (Fig. 2, p. 8), assessment may take place towards the end of the cycle, but this does not imply that, in practice, assessment should take place only at the end of a course: it must be emphasized again that curricular objectives may be redefined any number of times during the course in response to individual needs, and that these models of the curriculum process allow for any suitable methods of assessment to be used, ranging from closely-monitored continuous assessment through to end-of-course tests or examinations, or both.

The importance of curricular evaluation is further stressed by Brannen, Holloway and Peeke (1980) who describe it as "an important device for assessing the validity of curriculum innovation. Do the new courses do what they are supposed to do? Are they accountable to students and employers? Are they pedagogically sound?" Five criteria by which a system of curriculum evaluation may be judged have been suggested by Wilhelms (1970), who argues that evaluation must: (a) facilitate self- evaluations (by staff and students), (b) encompass every objective valued by the college, (c) facilitate learning and teaching, (d) produce records appropriate to the purposes for which records are essential and (e) provide continuing feedback into the larger questions of curriculum development and educational policy. Any attempt to meet these criteria would immediately bring home once more the point made by Stenhouse (1975): "Evaluation is a fundamental part of curriculum development, not an appendage. Its job is to collect facts a course developer can and will use to do a better job, and facts from which a deeper understanding of the educational process will emerge". This last point highlights the importance of Wilhelms' first criterion—that evaluation should facilitate self-evaluation by staff—and indeed points to the usefulness of course evaluation as a method of enhancing staff awareness and responsiveness to the needs of students—a pertinent

Fig. 4. Russell & Latcham, 1979.



issue according to Stenhouse who comments that: "the background of some F.E. staff and administrative constraints often do not permit an image of 'teacher as learner'". We shall return to this point when discussing staff training (see below).

Assessment techniques should be suggested by the particular kind of curricular aims and objectives selected for any course and should be integrated into the teaching process. In the FEU report (1979) on post-16 pre-employment courses, it was recommended that an appropriate means of recording assessment was by a profile system, such as the one devised by the Scottish Council for Research in Education (1977). The aim of the SCRE project was the design of a comprehensive system of assessment for the full range of school achievement. This system has particular relevance to young people with special educational needs in that they have been excluded traditionally from a comprehensive school leaving assessment scheme. The profile system focuses on the assessment of subject achievement, basic skills and personal characteristics. Subject achievement is assessed within a norm referenced orientation. One of the difficulties with such an orientation is the comparability of assessments from one institution to another. In the SCRE study this emerged in the difficulty encountered by teachers in defining the reference group as the average for the age group within the school. By contrast, the skill gradings were based on a criterion referenced orientation

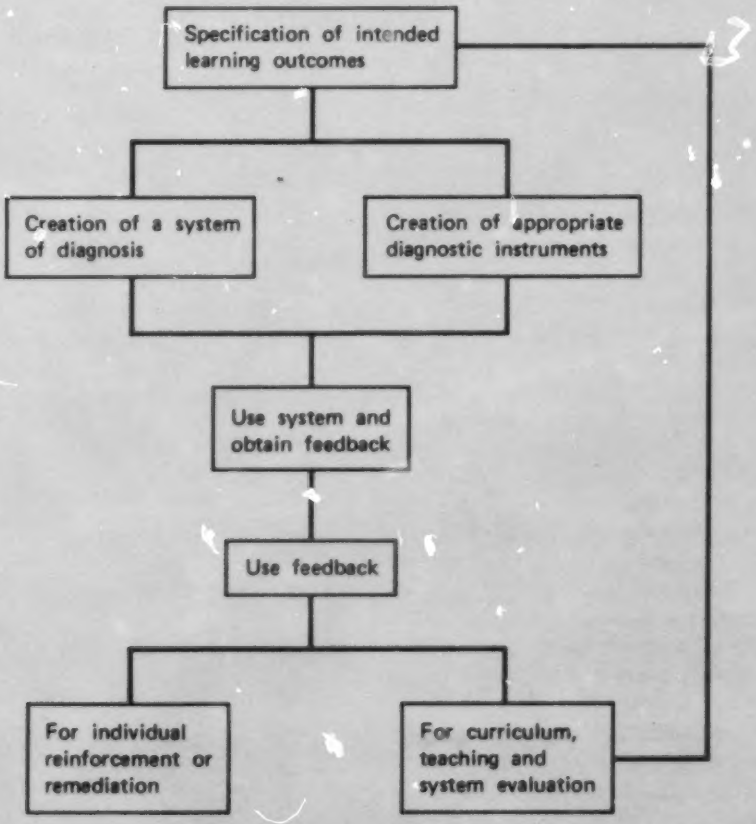
where ratings are meant to reflect a standard of competence with respect to a sequence of objectives.

In addition to the requirements that assessment be reliable, valid and comparable, there is the consideration of practicality. This often reflects organisational assumptions and practices, though it is important that investment of time in assessment is proportional to the value of the information in terms of achieving curricular aims. The very restricted use of profiling in secondary schools, as surveyed by the Schools Council (Balogh, 1982), could be partly attributed to the question of the ease of administration, though it is unlikely to be the only factor. As noted in the FEU Report *A Basis for Choice* (FEU, 1979), not all curricular aims and objectives lend themselves to performance based definition in terms of competences. Certain aims relate to experiences for which assessment would involve a record of these experiences. This aspect of assessment is covered by the section "other observations" in the SCRE profile system. See *Profiles* (FEU, 1982a) for further discussion of this area.

The feasibility of developing methods of assessment which are part of the teaching process has been investigated in Scottish secondary schools in the Diagnostic Assessment Project (Black and Dockrell, 1980). Though the term "diagnostic" has certain undesirable connotations, its use refers to the crucial role of assessment in relation to objectives and in guiding subsequent teaching. The model of assessment adopted by Black and Dockrell (Fig. 5) is similar to those described above.

What is emphasised in this model is that diagnostic

Fig. 5 A model for the creation of diagnostic systems (Black and Dockrell, 1980)


Specification of intended learning outcomes
Creation of a system of diagnosis
Creation of appropriate diagnostic instruments
Use system and obtain feedback
Use feedback
For individual reinforcement or remediation
For curriculum, teaching and system evaluation

assessment is not a new kind of test but an approach in which assessment is used as feedback by teachers to alter their teaching in relevant ways. The three projects set up by the Scottish Council for Research in Education—in Home Economics, Geography and Technical Education—involved small-scale case studies which tried to throw light on the practicalities of diagnostic assessment, the types of tests appropriate for such assessment, how teachers evaluated the approach and the sort of research strategies appropriate for an investigation in this area. One of the conclusions to the studies was that teachers thought that such an approach would provide a valuable contribution to their teaching. However it was felt by teachers that they would be unable to use the approach on a significant scale unless they had more time for preparation or a degree of external support.

3.4 Staff Training

The importance of adequate staff training in appropriate assessment techniques for students with special educational needs cannot be over-emphasized, since assessment forms an integral part of the process of effective curriculum planning (see above). Through evaluation of the course curriculum, teaching staff are able to become more fully aware of, and responsive to, the needs of students. Additionally, they will become more aware of their own training needs. It is to be hoped that current research (see below) will highlight these needs and that future training courses will place greater emphasis on the skills required to implement certain assessment techniques. For example, staff may need to be trained in observational skills if checklists or student profiles are to be used.

Although courses for students with special needs have proliferated in colleges of further education over the past few years, there has not been a corresponding increase in emphasis of this area in initial teacher training or post-training courses. However, since 1977/78 a Certificate in the Teaching of the Handicapped in F.E. has been available to those completing the City & Guilds 731 part-time teacher training programme. The aims and requirements of this course are discussed in an article by David Hutchinson, of North Nottinghamshire College, in *Educare*, the journal of the National Bureau for Handicapped Students (March, 1982). Furthermore, the National Bureau for Handicapped Students (NBHS) is currently conducting a study on staff training and development in colleges of F.E. This will cover both "teachers' assessments of handicapped students' needs, and teachers' assessment of their own needs, with particular reference to the areas of knowledge they require in their own training in order to help them to teach effectively their students, and the form of training preferred" (Research news *Educare*, p. 32, No. 14 March 1982).

IV Results of Postal Survey

4.1 Overall Pattern of Results

Our survey yielded data on a total of approximately 2,120 students attending 64 separate courses or programmes in 40 colleges of further education. Of the total number of students 57% were male and 43% female. About 55% were described as "ESN(M)", while 45% had other forms of special need or had no special needs. About 22% of the total number of students had previously attended an ordinary school, 49% a special school, and 4% a special unit within an ordinary school. 12% had not come directly from school, but from a variety of other sources such as residential homes or unemployment.

The age-range of students in the survey was from 15 years (in the case of students on link courses) up to a theoretical maximum of "any age" on courses admitting adults up to and beyond 30 years of age. However, over 90% of courses catered for students of under 21 despite the fact that on only 47% of courses was there a specified age-limit (generally of 20 years or below) beyond which students could not remain on the course.

Of the 64 courses surveyed, 52% came under General Studies, or General & Communication Studies Departments. 23% came under Social and/or Community Studies Departments, and 3% under Departments such as Engineering or Building. The rest, 22%, came under a variety of other Departments such as Liberal Studies, Environmental Studies, etc.

56% of all courses were funded by local education authorities, 30% by the Manpower Services Commission, and the remaining 14% by a combination of these two sources or, in a few cases, other sources. 64% of all courses were described as full-time, 33% as part-time, and the remaining 3% were offered on a full-time or part-time basis.

Courses varied in length from 3 months to 2 years, but could also vary considerably from student to student within the same course, as in the case of "roll on, roll off" courses. The most common course length was one year, followed by short courses of between 3 and 6 months duration.

Of particular interest was the very high percentage of courses that had been established for a relatively short time. 30% of all courses had been established for only one or two years, while as many as 80% had been running for less than 6 years. This illustrates clearly how recent the advent of courses for students with moderate learning difficulties has been. This also helps to account for the wide variety of courses, curricula and types of assessment that are to be found, and for the generally "piecemeal" nature of provision also noted by Bradley and Hegarty (1982).

4.2 Pattern of Results According to Major Course Types

In the following sections, the data will frequently be discussed in relation to four major types of courses. The rationale behind this is explained here.

In view of the concern of the study with the relationship between assessment and the curriculum, and because it was felt that there might be considerable differences in the aims and use of assessment between courses having different curricular aims, it was decided to categorise the data broadly into four types:

(1) General Education courses. These might have a real or simulated work-experience component, but the major aim would be the improvement of general educational and social skills, rather than training in job skills.

(2) Work Introduction courses. These might, especially in view of the current employment situation, contain a general education component, but the major aim would still be to introduce the student to specific job skills and the social skills required in the workplace, the ultimate aim being to make him or her fit for employment.

(3) Combined General Education and Work Introduction courses. Courses combining the aims of both (1) and (2) above, and attaching equal priority to both.

(4) Link courses. Courses in which students still attending school would spend time in a college, usually with the aim of building up the skills necessary to follow a full-time college course or to obtain employment. While link courses might share the curricular aims of (1), (2) and (3) above, it was felt that their different structure merited inclusion in a separate category.

N.B. Any course which did not fit into the above categories was classified as (5) ("Other"). Only one such course was found. This was an Employment Rehabilitation course running alongside link and work preparation courses in one college and having many characteristics in common with category (2).

It was not always easy to tell from the questionnaire

responses whether we had correctly classified a course, since detailed questions on the curriculum content did not form part of our survey. However, from the course title and other information given in the questionnaire or attached with it, a classification was made. It should be noted that the main distinction of interest appears to be between Work Introduction courses (Category 2) and other General or Combined courses (categories 1 and 3) with Link courses being a slightly different consideration.

Fig. 6 shows some of the general statistics on the students and courses covered by the survey and described in the preceding section, broken down by major types of course. (N.B. Where percentages do not total to 100 this is because some information was missing—either because it was not known by the tutor completing the questionnaire, or because it had not been filled in.)

It is interesting to note that courses in Category (3)—Combined courses—seem to be the most recent and innovative. These courses take students primarily from special schools (the only courses where more than half the students, on average, were from special schools). 36% said that the course this year was not typical of previous years, possibly reflecting their more recent establishment, by comparison with only 13% of Work Introduction course tutors who gave this response.

4.3 Pre-Course Assessment

4.3.1 *Timing*

In this study we felt that the *timing* of a college's initial contact with a prospective student might be important

Fig. 6. General Charactenstics of Survey Data broken down by Major Course Types

	General Education (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)	*Other* (5)	*Totals*
No. of courses	8	33	16	6	1	64
No. of boys	115	687	122	191	35	1,150
No. of girls	108	422	115	214	16	875
Total No. of students	223	1,109	237	405	51	2,025
Course length (min)	4 months	3 months	3 months	8 months	3 months	
Course length (max)	2 years	2 years	2 years	1 year	3 months	
% specialist qualified tutors	38	55	44	60	100	
% courses established less than 4 years	87.5	75.9	93.7	50.00	100	
% courses established more than 4 years	12.5	24.1	6.3	50.00	1	
% students from ordinary schools	39	28	14	0	15	*22
% students from special schools	40	48	62	48	20	*49
% students from special units	1	4	7	2	8	*3
% students not from school	2	10	5	0	4	*12
% full-time courses	50	70	81	0	1	
% part-time courses	50	24	19	100	0	
% full-time/part-time	0	6	0	0	0	
% post-school	75	76	94	0	0	
% link	0	9	6	100	0	
% infill	12.5	0	0	0	0	
% day release	12.5	6	0	0	0	
% other	0	9	0	0	100	

*denotes overall average

Fig. 7. Length of Time before Entry to F.E. Course that Initial Assessment of Students Usually Takes Place

Timing	*% responses*				
	Overall	*General Education* (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)
Less than 1 month	30	25	38	25	17
Less than 3 months	17	25	10	13	33
3 to 6 months	23	38	17	31	17
6 to 12 months	12	0	7	31	0
1 to 2 years	3	0	7	0	0
More than 2 years	3	0	7	0	0
Other	12	13	14	0	33
Missing cases = 4					

and indicative of the approach taken to pre-course assessment. It might reflect the quality and amount of school/college liaison and the role of the specialist careers service, and could bear a relation to the subsequent assessment policy of the college and performance of the student. Although it was recognized that the timing of initial contact and assessment might vary considerably from student to student, even within the same college or course, tutors were asked to specify the *most usual* timing of initial contact and assessment.

Fig. 7 illustrates both the overall pattern of responses, and the breakdown of responses according to the main course types (see above for a definition of these). (N.B. It should be noted that there are four cases of missing data, all Work Introduction courses, which may affect the interpretation of the results.) The total percentage of responses in each time category (less than 1 month, less than 3 months, etc.) can easily be read by looking at the Column Totals percentages in the first column of the table. Thus, it can be seen that in 30% of cases, initial contact and assessment took place less than one month before the student's entry to the course. In fact, a proportion of these responses represent no pre-course assessment whatsoever, as a further question on this issue revealed (see below). A further 10% of all responses indicated initial contact less than 3 months before entry, while at the other end of the scale, a total of less than 7% of tutors indicated initial contact a year or more before entry. The 12% of responses in the "other" category mainly refer to tutors who play no part in pre-course assessment and had ticked this category in preference to the "less than 1 month before entry" category. Where the tutor and college claim to play no part in pre-course assessment mention is generally made of the role of the specialist careers officer, in conjunction with the school, in selecting appropriate students.

Looking at the main course types, it can be seen that the pattern for Work Introduction courses is the most varied, since here is found the largest proportion of assessments made 'less than 1 month" before entry, but also the *only* assessments to be carried out more than a year before entry. On General Education and Link courses all assessments are made 6 months or less before entry, and on Combined courses a year or less before entry. As mentioned above, a proportion of tutors claimed to have no involvement in pre-course assessment, and a further question (on the timing of college involvement in pre-course assessment) revealed that these tutors constituted just over 35% of all those in the survey—a surprisingly high proportion, indicating again the possibility that school/college liaison is often very limited and that assessment and selection of prospective students is left to the school and specialist careers service. This may have important implications for the concept of curriculum planning, especially in relation to the avoidance of duplicating the school leavers' curriculum and ensuring maximum continuity and development of students' skills. A further 28% of tutors said that assessment took place on "one or two specific occasions", 12% "on several occasions over a period of time", and 18% "continuously over a period of time". It was interesting to note that the course type on which the most "no involvement" responses

Fig. 8. Personnel on Whose Judgement Tutors Would Choose to Rely in the Assessment of Prospective Students

	Overall %	*General Education* (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)
1. The class teacher	17	38	6	19	50
2. The head teacher	16	13	9	19	50
3. The specialist careers officer	44	13	46	69	17
4. You as prospective tutor	41	50	42	44	17
5. The college Principal	0	0	0	0	0
6. The college Head of Dept	6	0	9	6	0
7. The parents	5	38	0	0	0
8. Other	3	13	0	6	0

occurred was Work Introduction (48% of these courses), while the highest proportion of "continuous" assessment prior to college entry was undertaken on Combined courses (25%). All but one of the Link courses in our survey indicated that the college had at least some involvement in pre-course assessment of students, which is surely to be expected given the usual function of a "link" course.

4.3.2 *Personnel*

In response to our question "on whose judgement would you choose to rely most heavily in assessing the student's suitability for the course?", the importance of the specialist careers service was again highlighted. Tutors could opt for one or two answers to this question. The results, overall and by main course types, are illustrated in Fig. 8. 64% of tutors opted to give two answers and the rest (except for a very few who did not give an answer) gave one answer. As can be seen from Fig. 8, the most commonly specified individual was the specialist careers officer, particularly in the case of Combined and Work Introduction course tutors. The college tutor came in second position and the combination of these two individuals was by far the most popular where two answers were given (23% of the total). Overall, the percentages nominating the class teacher and head teacher were low, but the relative importance of these individuals to Link course tutors is illustrated in the table. It was interesting to note that the only tutors who would choose to rely most heavily on the judgement of the student's parents were General Education course tutors. Few favoured the college Head of Department, and none the college Principal.

It was interesting to note that almost 70% of our respondents indicated that a "named person" does exist to co-ordinate matters relating to students with special needs in their college. However, these individuals are not always involved in pre-entry assessment. There was a named person for every Link course on our survey, for 75% of General Education courses, 66% of Work Introduction courses and 60% of Combined courses (possibly again reflecting the relatively new status of these courses). In many instances the named person was the Lecturer Grade II, Senior course tutor or Head of Department responsible for organising courses for students with special needs.

Over 70% of all tutors themselves took part in the final decision as to whether or not to admit a student to the course. In 17% of cases the Head of Department was involved in the decision and in 27% of cases someone else, generally the specialist careers officer, was involved. However, the college Principal played no part in the decision-making process at any college in our survey.

Fig. 9. % Tutors Considering Various Factors Important in Pre-course Assessment

	Overall	*General Education* (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)
1. Standard of literacy	52	38	53	63	33
2. Standard of numeracy	48	38	49	56	33
3. Manual dexterity/ motor skills	33	13	39	31	33
4. Social competence with adults	49	38	46	69	17
5. Social competence with peers	46	25	43	63	33
6. "Teachability" (capacity to respond to teacher, follow instructions etc.)	60	50	61	56	68
7. "Employability" or employment potential	33	13	52	13	0
8. Attitudes and needs of student's family	44	63	39	56	0
9. Range of other options available to student if not attending the course	56	63	49	69	33
10. Level of motivation/ self-sufficiency/ independence shown by student	59	50	55	63	67
11. Degree of need of student for more education/training before proceeding to other course/work	75	75	73	75	67
12. Other	19	0	24	13	33

(Missing cases = 1)

4.3.3 *Content*

Our question on those factors considered to be particularly important when assessing a prospective student for the course highlighted the fact that it was not literacy, numeracy, or motor skills which were felt to be of greatest importance (Fig. 9). The most frequently cited factor to be taken into account at this stage of assessment was the student's degree of need for further education/ training before proceeding to other courses or employment (75% of all tutors). The next most commonly cited factor was "teachability", or the capacity to respond to the teacher, follow instructions, and so forth, and related to this was the motivation and self-sufficiency of the student, cited by 59% of all tutors. The range of other options open to the student if he or she was not admitted to the course was the next most frequently mentioned consideration (56% of all tutors), with standard of literacy coming after all these (52%) and numeracy and motor skills rated even lower (48% and 33% respectively). Social competence with adults and peers, and the attitudes and needs of the student's family were rated particularly important by just under half the total sample, but an especially interesting result is the fact that "employability"

or employment potential was (together with manual dexterity/motor skills) the *least* frequently cited factor of importance, mentioned by only 33% of all tutors.

When we look at these results broken down by the main course types, we can see a slightly different, and interesting, pattern emerging. For example, a glance will show that tutors on Combined courses generally appear to have given a greater number of "positive" responses than those in other groups to several factors on our list. Notable amongst these are social competence with adults and social competence with peers, which are rated by these tutors as being considerably more important than by tutors on other courses. It is perhaps possible that this is linked to the increasing orientation of these comparatively new courses to social education and "education for leisure", which would demand a measure of basic social competence if the student was to profit from the course, and to the growing need for students to raise their levels of social competence if they are to compete for jobs in a dwindling labour market. It is interesting in this context to note that the second highest proportion of tutors rating social competence as being particularly important was in the Work Introduction courses category, with General Education and Link courses falling far behind. It is perhaps not surprising to note that tutors on Link courses place a zero level of importance on "employability" while Work Introduction tutors rate this factor highest, together with manual dexterity/motor skills.

Another way of discovering what tutors consider to be important when assessing students prior to entry is to ask them to specify "rejection criteria"—in other words, to define those circumstances in which they would *not* be prepared to admit a prospective student. Responses here again highlighted the fact that less emphasis was placed on academic ability than on social and motivational factors. Many tutors mentioned that they would rarely, if ever, turn a student away, but the most commonly cited reason for so doing would be emotional or behaviour problems (39% of the total). This was mainly due to the adverse effect it was felt emotionally disturbed students would have on the rest of the group—examples from our survey mention "college rejectors—who threaten and bully other students" or those who are "highly disruptive and attention-seeking—as this undermines the others' confidence".

The next most frequently cited factor was health, in the sense of the student with severe physical or medical problems. This was mentioned by 28% of all tutors. The point to stress here is that most courses in our survey are not equipped to offer the level of supervision and care that might be required by those with severe physical handicap or health problems, and the ability of the student to participate in the course without such care and supervision was felt to be important, particularly since many courses lay great emphasis on "independent living." Workshop safety was also mentioned in connection with this point. 25% of respondents mentioned lack of ability as a significant factor in the decision not to admit a student, though this tended to be with reference to ESN(S) students or to "total illiteracy". It was also interesting to note that a number of tutors also mentioned "above average ability" as a reason for not admitting students. A connection was made here between high ability and possible disruptive behaviour in the group. 20% of tutors felt that motivational factors were important, and would not admit a student who did not really wish to attend college or who was "not prepared to make an effort towards independent living", while 9% mentioned travel or domestic problems as being significant—for example, a student who could not travel to college by public transport would be considered unsuitable. The overall impression given by respondents was that a balanced *group* of students was required for successful learning and progress to take place, and that students who might upset this balance by making exceptionally heavy demands on their tutors and peers were not considered suitable for admittance.

4.3.4 *Method*

The above section gives some idea of what tutors consider important when carrying out pre-course assessment, while this section considers how they obtain information on these issues and to what extent they make use of information received. Fig. 10 (p. 19) shows the percentage of tutors to whom information of various kinds was available, and the percentage who made use of this, both over the total survey and broken down by main course types.

This table illustrates once again the importance of the specialist careers service at this stage of assessment. Over 70% of all tutors specified that information from this source was both available and utilized in the assessment process. Furthermore, only 3% of all tutors wanted better

Fig. 10. Availability (A) and Use (U) of Various Kinds of Information by Tutors at the Pre-course Stage

	General Education		*Work Introduction*		*Combined Courses*		*Link Courses*		*Total*	
	A	U	A	U	A	U	A	U	A	U
a. School records (basic skills)	63	63	58	55	81	81	83	50	66	63
b. School records (other)	63	63	58	55	75	75	67	33	63	59
c. Medical records (vision/hearing)	13	13	49	42	44	44	50	33	44	41
d. Medical records (motor)	13	13	42	36	44	44	33	33	39	36
e. Medical records (general)	25	25	52	46	50	50	67	50	50	45
f. Discussion (school head)	50	50	46	39	50	50	83	67	52	47
g. Discussion (class teacher)	25	25	39	39	63	63	83	67	47	45
h. Information from specialist careers officer	63	63	78	73	94	94	17	17	72	72
i. Assessment by college tutor (class contact)	43	43	36	36	56	50	17	17	39	38
j. Assessment by college tutor (interview)	86	71	55	52	75	69	50	33	61	55
k. College tests	43	43	24	24	31	25	17	0	25	23
l. Case-conference	14	14	24	24	44	44	67	50	30	25
m. Other	14	0	12	12	25	25	17	17	16	14

access to the careers service. Those who made most use of their specialist careers service were tutors on Work Introduction or Combined courses, compared with only a small minority of tutors on Link courses. Next in overall importance came school records, particularly those dealing with basic educational skills—these were available to 66% of all tutors and used by 63%. Tutors on Work Introduction courses made rather less use than others of school records, and it was surprising that although such records were available to 83% of all tutors on Link courses, only 50% made use of them.

Other kinds of information from schools, for example on the personal qualities of students, were also quite widely available and were used by a total of 59% of tutors—more often by General Education and Combined course tutors, especially the latter, where 75% made use of this kind of information. Combined course tutors were also the most likely (50%) to have class contact with their prospective students prior to commencement of the course (although this was, in general, not a widely used procedure), indicating once again the possibility that staff on these relatively new courses are making positive attempts to find out more about their students than can be gleaned from written records. This is further borne out by consideration of the percentages of tutors who held discussions with the class teacher or school head. Overall, a surprisingly low total of tutors actually had the opportunity, or made use of it, to discuss prospective students with the class teacher (45%) or the school head (47%). However, on looking at the breakdown of these figures by course types, it becomes clear that a relatively high proportion of Combined course and Link course tutors do use this procedure as part of the assessment process—for example 67% of Link course tutors and 63% of Combined course tutors meet the class teacher, compared with 39% and 25% of Work Introduction and General Education tutors respectively. Figures are more evenly spread for discussions with the school head, but, not surprisingly, tutors on Link courses are still those most likely to use this procedure. 19% of all tutors wanted

Fig. 11. Summary of the Improvements in Access to Records and Information Requested by Tutors

	Overall %	*General Education* (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)
Better access to school records	19	25	18	13	33
Better access to medical records	23	25	21	31	17
Better access to careers office information/ records	3	0	0	6	17
Other (e.g. case-conference records)	6	13	3	13	0
(missing cases = 4)					

better access to school records, particularly tutors on General Education and Link courses.

The third most important method of information-gathering at this stage of assessment as indicated by our survey was an interview between the prospective student and the college tutor, available to 61% and used by 55% of all tutors. However, this would appear to indicate that in 45% of admissions, no preliminary interview has taken place. Students most likely to have had a preliminary interview are those on General Education or Combined courses. Those on Link courses are least likely to have been interviewed by their prospective tutor, but on the other hand the tutor is more likely to have met their class teacher (see above). Only 23% of all tutors used some form of college based entrance test, with by far the largest majority of these (43%) on General Education courses. Only 25% of tutors overall used a case-conference involving the school, college and perhaps specialist careers service as part of the pre-entry assessment procedure, but this approach was taken by considerably more tutors on Combined and Link courses (44% and 50%) than those on General Education or Work Introduction courses (14% and 15%), again indicating that school-college contact appears to be greater where Combined courses are concerned, and, not so surprisingly, on Link courses.

Medical records were available to 40–50% of the tutors on all except General Education courses, where the figure was much lower, and were used by the majority of tutors to whom they were available as part of the pre-entry assessment process. Those pertaining to the students' general health were more widely used than those relating to specific problems with vision, hearing or motor function, but were still available to and used by half or less of tutors in all groups. However, better access to medical records was wanted by 23% of all tutors, rising to 31% of tutors on Combined courses. (See Fig. 11).

N.B. Overall, about 39% of tutors requested better access to at least one of the above sources of information.

Of all sources of information, those thought to be "particularly useful" corresponded to the pattern of availability/use responses above: school records, information from the specialist careers officer, interview with the college tutor and discussions with the class teacher were considered the most useful by tutors in our survey.

4.3.5 *General Comments on Pre-Entry Assessment*

To gain an idea of the general policy of each college towards pre-entry assessment for students in the target group, tutors were asked to tick whichever of three statements most nearly reflected their views on the admission of students to their course. The results are shown below (Fig. 12, p. 21).

This illustrates that in over 80% of cases, students are not necessarily being selected on the basis of a predetermined curriculum and course structure, into which they must "fit". Many courses do have an established structure, but will modify this to meet the needs of students of varying ability. From our survey, it would seem that the students' social adaptability and willingness to participate in the course are more important than their educational records, within broad limits, and that the course curriculum can be modified to suit a variety of

Fig. 12. Pre-Course Assessment Policy of Course Tutors

	Overall %	*General Education* (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)
1. Well-established course with good idea of students who will benefit: therefore able to select appropriate students	14	25	18	6	0
2. Course has established structure but is open to modification to meet the needs of students of wider range of ability	61	38	58	63	100
3. Taking type of student not formerly accepted and therefore building up curriculum to meet their needs	20	38	18	25	0

needs providing that these social and motivational criteria are satisfied.

Finally, in our first section of the questionnaire, we asked tutors to describe the main shortcomings, if any, of the assessment procedures they used prior to the students' entry to the course. Lack of ready availability of information from schools and other sources was the most commonly cited shortcoming (22%), and some complained that they felt too dependent upon the information received from the school or careers office (9%). 8% felt that appropriate, "objective" tests were not available, and smaller numbers cited a variety of other factors, for example lack of time for assessment including too short a time for interviews with students and "misleading" or inappropriate information from the school or careers office—it was suggested that some schools have "unrealistic expectations" for their pupils, or that a careers officer might push for students to be accepted for a college course since there were few other options available for them to take up.

4.4 Assessment During the Course

4.4.1 *Methods*

A wide variety of assessment methods, ranging from the very informal to the very formal, were used by the tutors in our survey for their students during the course. The overall percentages of those using each method are shown in Fig. 13 on page 22.

It can be seen from this that much of the assessment carried out is informal and personal monitoring by the course tutor and by other tutors who come into contact with the student. An interesting figure is that 53% of all respondents are using checklists or profiling techniques for their students. This figure rises to 63% of tutors on General Education and Combined courses. In some cases these checklists or profiles have been developed by the college staff in relation to the curriculum and demands made by employers, etc. while in other cases staff have adapted existing published material to suit their particular needs. For example, one college has produced a questionnaire based on Whelan and Speake's *Learning to Cope*, with sections to be completed by students, their parents and former teachers, which allows the college to provide opportunities for the student to strengthen those skills in need of improvement, and is followed up by weekly assessments by the tutor and student. Other colleges are using published material with minor adaptations, or with no adaptations, for example *Pathways to Independence* (Jeffree & Cheseldine, 1979), the Gunzberg Progress Assessment Charts or the Bristol Social Adjustment Guides. However, there is some dissatisfaction with the use of these methods (see below), since in the main they were designed for students with severe

Fig. 13. Assessment during the Course

Method	*Overall*	*General Education* (1)	*Work Introduction* (2)	*Combined Courses* (3)	*Link Courses* (4)
1. Informal, personal assessment by course tutor	91	100	94	81	83
2. Use of checklists, student profiles or similar	53	63	52	63	17
3. Structured interviews with student	33	38	33	38	0
4. Tests and or/examinations (internal)	31	38	33	19	33
5. Tests and or/examinations (external)	14	25	12	19	0
6. Reports from work placement supervisor (where applicable)	66	62	70	81	0
7. Reports from parents	19	50	9	25	17
8. Multidisciplinary case-conference for individual students	38	25	39	44	17
9. College reports from all lecturers who teach on course	77	88	76	67	100
10. Other	13	13	9	19	17
(missing cases = 0)					

learning difficulties.

Regarding how the methods used have been developed, over 89% of tutors claimed that this was at least partly through "personal experience as to the best methods", again underlining the predominance of personal, informal assessment over the use of tests, examinations, etc. In 64% of cases, assessment procedures had been decided upon through consultation between college staff, while 44% had consulted "outside" professionals such as educational psychologists and 33% had consulted available test materials and books. Relatively few had consulted with students and/or their parents (19%), with employers (9%), with Examining Bodies or Training Boards (3%), or with the local education authority (6%) when deciding upon methods of assessment to be used.

4.4.2 *Content and Timing*

Fig. 14 on page 23 shows the overall response to our question on the content of assessment during the course, giving the percentages of the total number of tutors who try to assess each factor, and the frequency of assessment (expressed as a percentage of the number of tutors assessing the factor in question).

It is interesting to note here that in contrast with pre-course assessment, literacy and numeracy are of particular importance in assessment during the course. However, the student's personality and social skills within the college environment are still considered equally important, with motivational factors (11) following closely behind. The suitability of the course curriculum for the student is also monitored by the great majority of tutors, although interestingly, not all of these tutors see this as a means of evaluating the course curriculum (see below). The ability to perform a job, and the student's employment potential, receive almost the least overall attention of any areas to be assessed during the course, although 70% of tutors assess manual dexterity/motor skills, often in relation to practical workshop experience, indicating that "work" skills are assessed in a generalized way rather than in relation to a specific job or employment prospect. It is

Fig. 14. Overall Responses on Content and Frequency of Assessment During the Course

Aim to Assess		*Frequency*		
	Total % of Tutors	*Once or twice*	*At regular intervals*	*On a continuous basis*
1. Standard of literacy	91	17	14	66
2. Standard of numeracy	88	16	16	67
3. Manual dexterity/motor skills	70	17	6	73
4. Personality/social skills within college environment	89	7	7	77
5. Personality/social skills outside college environment	52	18	15	58
6. Personality/social skills at the workplace (where applicable)	63	13	15	68
7. Ability to perform job (where applicable)	63	13	20	63
8. Employment potential, or "employability" of student	69	11	18	64
9. Suitability of course curriculum for student	77	4	4	74
10. Ability of student to proceed further with course	69	21	16	57
11. Self-sufficiency of student (e.g. motivation to study, independent living, etc.)	77	8	10	76
12. Creative/recreational skills	68	7	23	63
13. Other	6	16	0	67

(Missing cases: = 2 (general data)
= Varies between 1 and 20 (frequency data))

interesting to note that manual dexterity, which was given a very low priority in pre-course assessment, is now considered to be relatively important, and this suggests that there should be more consideration given to motor skills at the pre-course assessment stage in order to effect careful curriculum planning for individual students. Looking at the main course types (Fig. 15) it is not surprising that motor skills are assessed by more tutors on Work

Fig. 15. Content of Assessment During the Course

	% Responses				
	Overall	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
1. Standard of literacy	91	88	91	100	67
2. Standard of numeracy	88	88	88	88	84
3. Manual dexterity/motor skills	70	50	67	94	50
4. Personality/social skills within college environment	89	100	85	100	84
5. Personality/social skills outside college environment	52	38	55	63	17
6. Personality/social skills at the workplace	63	38	70	69	33
7. Ability to perform job	63	38	64	75	50
8. Employment potential/"employability"	69	25	70	88	67
9. Suitability of course curriculum for student	77	100	67	88	67
10. Ability of student to proceed further with course	69	75	64	75	67
11. Self-sufficiency of student (motivation, independence)	77	88	73	81	67
12. Creative/recreational skills	68	63	61	88	50
13. Other	6	0	3	19	0

Missing cases = 2

Introduction or Combined courses than those on General Education courses, in view of the aforementioned context in which this assessment often takes place. On the other hand, literacy and numeracy tend to be assessed by roughly similar percentages (88–100%) of tutors across all major course types except Link courses where literacy is not assessed by one third of tutors, probably because this is left to the school. Rather more tutors on Work Introduction and Combined courses are concerned with personality and social skills outside the college and at the workplace than those on General Education courses, which is perhaps not surprising. This table also illustrates that relatively high proportions of tutors on Work Introduction and Combined courses *do* assess the student's ability to perform a job, and, to a somewhat greater extent, his or her employment potential, although the overall percentages of tutors assessing these factors is lower (see above), owing to the relative lack of concern with these factors by General Education and Link course tutors.

With regard to the timing of assessment, the most usual method is "continuous"—but this does not mean that more formal methods are not used at intervals, as well.

4.4.3 *Personnel*

In 67% of all cases the tutors who responded to our questionnaires had themselves played at least some part in implementing the assessment procedures currently in use during the course. 30% said that other college staff had been involved in this, and 27% mentioned their predecessor as course tutor. In very few cases was the college Principal or Head of Department involved, but about 19% mentioned the specialist careers officer, educational or occupational psychologist as having played a role in setting up the assessment procedures. This contrasts with the 44% who had consulted with such "outside" professionals when developing assessment procedures (see previous paragraph), and probably indicates that tutors prefer to gain advice and then adapt this themselves to meet their own day-to-day needs.

4.4.4 *Aims of Assessment*

Fig. 16 shows the main aims of assessment during the course, over all respondents and broken down by main course types. The most commonly cited aims, as can be seen, are concerned with monitoring student progress, and the adaptation of teaching to meet individual needs. Despite the implication this second aim has for using assessment for curriculum evaluation purposes, considerably fewer tutors have cited this as an overt aim, although it is interesting to note that a far higher proportion (88%) of tutors on General Education courses do see assessment as a means of curriculum evaluation than those teaching on Work Introduction courses (52%). A relatively low emphasis is placed by all tutors on the use of assessment as a predictive tool (3), though the position

Fig. 16. Aims of Assessment During the Course

Aim	*Total %*	*Main Course Types (%)*			
		General Education	*Work Introduction*	*Combined Courses*	*Link Courses*
1. To assess the student's ability to cope with the course and his/her rate of progress	78	75	81	87	83
2. To modify teaching to meet individual needs in the light of (1)	80	75	84	93	67
3. To predict the student's future academic and/or employment potential	53	38	61	53	50
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of the course curriculum as a basis for course planning	53	88	52	67	17
5. to make available information which may be required by other tutors, employers or others concerned with students	58	50	61	60	67
6. As a method of having the course validated	13	0	13	27	0
7. Other	5	0	7	0	0

is reversed here as more Work Introduction courses do specify this as an aim than General Education or Combined courses. It is interesting to note that the prediction of a student's academic or employment potential is not seen as being any more important in end-of-course assessment either (see below). This might have a number of implications, including uncertainty about the student's future in the current employment market, a lack of continuity between college and "afterwards", and the fact that much of the informal, personal assessment going on in the college is difficult to apply to other situations.

4.4.5 *General Comments on Assessment During the Course*

Tutors made various comments on the main shortcomings of the assessment procedures they used during the course. The most common complaint was that available tests and other published material are inappropriate for students in the target group (38%). Secondly, tutors felt that assessment could be very time-consuming (30%). About 20% felt that staff lacked appropriate training in the administration and evaluation of assessment procedures, while smaller numbers made other comments, for example the effect of lack of continuity between school and college on assessment during the course, an overemphasis on testing, etc.

4.5 End-of-Course Assessment

4.5.1 *Method*

The methods used to assess students at the end of the course were very similar to those used during the course, with the addition of an interview with the specialist careers officer, which was conducted on over half the courses. The results are set out in Fig. 17. It can be seen that informal, personal assessment by the course tutor still plays a large part in the assessment process, with only a minority carrying out formal tests or examinations—in fact less than those who do this during the course. Reports from the work placement supervisor figure less importantly at the end of the course than during it, but the use of checklists or profiles rises slightly, except on General Education courses. One interesting figure is the extraordinarily high percentage of Combined courses on which an interview with the specialist careers officer is carried out (93%), while the figures for this on other types of courses are much lower.

Looking at how these methods have been developed, again the most commonly cited method was "personal experience as to the best methods" (67% of all tutors) and/or through consultation with other colleagues in the college (52%). 35% had consulted with the specialist careers officer, and 20% with other "outside" professionals (e.g. educational psychologist). Only 5% had

Fig. 17. End-of-Course Assessment

Methods	*Overall*	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
1. Informal, personal assessment by course tutor	81	88	87	86	83
2. Use of checklists, student profiles, assessment schedules etc.	52	38	58	64	33
3. Structured interview with student	31	38	29	50	17
4. Test(s) and/or examinations (internal)	14	25	16	14	0
5. Test(s) and/or examinations (external)	14	25	16	14	0
6. Report from work placement supervisor (where applicable)	55	50	61	79	0
7. Report from parents	14	25	13	14	16
8. Interview with specialist careers officer	53	25	58	93	17
9. Other	4	0	10	7	0
(Missing cases = 4)					

responded to employers' demands (these were all Work Introduction courses) and 2% to the demands of Examining Bodies or Training Boards.

4.5.2 *Content*

Fig. 18 shows the responses to our question on the content of end-of-course assessment, and illustrates once again the importance of social skills, which receives the highest overall rating of any factor to be assessed. Other highly important issues are the student's suitability for further courses, training or placement which indicates a strong concern for his or her future. This result is an interesting one, since in a subsequent question on tutor's knowledge of where their students would be going after the course, 77% said they did know, but 38% claimed this would have no effect on their assessment procedures, and over half did not respond at all to the second part of the question.

The student's self-sufficiency (e.g. motivation, ability for independent living) is also considered a very important factor to assess at the end of the course, with literacy, and numeracy taking next priority. "Employability" takes a fairly low priority, particularly on Combined courses, and it may be that the idea of assessing a student's employment potential is being superseded by a wider concept of "living skills", including or excluding employment in the traditional sense.

4.5.3 *Aims of End-of-Course Assessment*

Consistent with the aims of assessment during the course, the most commonly cited aim of end-of-course assessment is to provide a summary or full report on the student's progress through the course (Fig. 19). It is interesting to see that although only 55% of all tutors use assessment to predict the student's academic and/or employment potential, 73% use it as a decision-making aid about the student's long-term or immediate future. Once again, General Education tutors are those most likely to use assessment as an aid to curriculum evaluation, but of the total survey under half of our respondents gave this as one purpose of end-of-course assessment.

4.5.4 *Personnel*

In 63% of cases tutors had themselves played a part in implementing end-of-course assessment procedures, while about 20% mentioned their predecessor or other

Fig. 18. End-of-Course Assessment

Aim to Assess	*Overall*	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
1. Standard of literacy	66	75	70	69	33
2. Standard of numeracy	63	75	66	75	50
3. Manual dexterity/motor skills	52	38	45	75	50
4. Personality/social skills in college	78	100	70	88	83
5. Personality/social skills outside college	48	63	45	63	17
6. Personality/social skills at workplace	52	50	55	69	0
7. Ability to perform job	50	38	58	56	17
8. Employment potential or employability	58	38	66	33	17
9. Ability to profit from course curriculum	45	50	39	56	50
10. Self-sufficiency (e.g. motivation, independent living)	73	88	66	88	67
11. Creative/recreational skills	41	63	27	63	33
12. Suitability for future courses, placement, training	77	75	75	81	83
13. Other	9	13	12	6	0
(Missing cases = 4)					

Fig. 19 Aims of End-of-Course Assessment

Aims	*Overall*	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
1. Provides summary or report on progress through course	70	50	73	88	67
2. Enables predictions about academic and/or employment potential	55	33	61	66	50
3. Aids decision-making about student's future	73	67	75	81	83
4. Aids decision-making on admissions policy for future students	13	50	3	13	33
5. Provides means for evaluating appropriateness of course curriculum	47	67	45	56	33
6. Provides measure of validation for course	13	50	6	19	0
7. Satisfies college policy or regulations	2	17	0	0	0
8. Satisfies demands of students, parents or employers	23	33	24	25	17
9. Other	11	17	9	6	33
(Missing cases = 5)					

college staff as being involved. One in five also mentioned people outside the college, such as the specialist careers officer, as having been involved. In few cases was the college Principal or Head of Department involved.

4.5.5 *General Comments on End-of-Course Assessment*

We asked tutors to indicate the relationship between end-of-course assessment and the rest of the assessment process by ticking whichever of three statements most nearly reflected their own position. The results are shown in Fig. 20.

This shows that three-quarters of all tutors on all types of courses see assessment as a cumulative process, with only a handful employing a separate, final assessment at the end of the course.

Some of the shortcomings of end-of-course assessment procedures indicated by tutors were the lack of time available to carry out the assessment (14%), the need to develop a leaving record or profile which would be of use to both student and employers/other tutors (8%), and lack of feedback to students, and the need for more standardized forms of assessment.

Fig. 20 Relationship Between End-of-Course Assessment & Rest of the Assessment Process

	Overall	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
1. Assessment procedure is cumulative and end-of-course assessment = final phase	75	63	70	88	84
2. Take into account assessment during course but final assessment is wholly or partly separate from cumulative assessment	8	0	12	6	0
3. Final assessment separate from and unrelated to any previous assessment during course	2	0	3	0	0
4. Other	6	13	6	0	17
(Missing cases = 6)					

4.6 General Comments

General Teaching Qualifications

Fig. 21 shows the percentages of tutors in our survey holding "general" teaching qualifications (i.e. not specifically in the field of special education):

Fig. 21 General Teaching Qualifications

	Overall %	General Education (1)	Work Introduction (2)	Combined Courses (3)	Link Courses (4)
Qualified	88	100	85	88	100
Unqualified	12	0	15	12	0
(Missing cases = 0)					

Fig. 22 shows the percentages of tutors holding "a special needs teaching qualification":

Fig. 22 Specialist Teaching Qualifications

	Overall %	General Education (1)	Work Introduction (2)	Combined Courses (3)	Link Courses (4)
Qualified	50	38	55	44	60
Unqualified	50	62	45	56	40
(Missing cases = 0)					

Fig. 23 shows a cross-tabulation of total length of F.E. teaching experience by the different main types of courses. Column percentages indicate the percentage of tutors on that particular type of course (e.g. General Education) having a certain number of years' experience, while row percentages indicate the overall number of tutors, across all types of course, having a certain number of years' experience.

Thus it can be seen that nearly 47%, or almost half, of all tutors have less than 5 years' experience in any field of F.E., while 8% have more than 15 years' experience. When we come to consider the number of years' experience these staff have had with students with special needs in F.E., we find that a considerably higher proportion of all tutors, almost 62%, have less than five years' experience, while 5% have more than 10 years' experience and none more than 15 years. (See Fig. 24).

Looking at the main course types, it appears that tutors on Link courses seem to have the most experience, both in general and specialized terms. Tutors on General Education courses seemed to have proportionately the most specialized experience, however, and those on Work Introduction courses the least number of years of specialized experience. We also asked tutors for details of their teaching experience outside F.E., and found that 75% of all General Education tutors, 73% of Work Introduction tutors, 75% of Combined course tutors and 33% of Link course tutors specified some such experience, with Work

Fig. 23 Total Length of F.E. Teaching Experience

	% Reponses				
	Overall	General Education (1)	Work Introduction (2)	Combined Courses (3)	Link Courses (4)
Under 5 years	47	63	49	50	0
5–10 years	25	25	27	13	50
11–15 years	20	0	18	25	50
16–20 years	6	0	7	13	0
Over 20 years	2	13	0	0	0
(Missing cases = 0)					

Fig. 24. Length of "Special Needs" Teaching Experience in F.E.

	% Reponses				
	Overall	General Education (1)	Work Introduction (2)	Combined Courses (3)	Link Courses (4)
1–2 years	22	0	26	25	0
3–4 years	40	43	36	50	40
5–10 years	33	43	32	25	60
11–15 years	5	14	7	0	0
Over 15 years	0	0	0	0	0
(Missing cases = 4)					

Introduction and Combined course tutors having proportionately the greatest length of experience in other forms of teaching. This probably reflects teaching experience within their specialized areas of work skills; the relatively low number of Link course tutors having other teaching experience probably reflects the fact that Link courses tend to have been established longer than all other kinds of courses, so opportunities for teaching on them have been available for longer. Finally, we looked at non-teaching experience, and found that 63% of General Education tutors, 45% of Work Introduction tutors, 50% of Combined course tutors and 50% of Link course tutors had had some other work experience, ranging from serving in the Forces to secretarial or personnel work.

Next we questioned tutors as to whether they had ever received any suitable training in assessment techniques for the students *currently* in their care, and found that, overall, 38% had and 62% had not. Between course types, these figures were broken down as follows (Fig. 25):

Fig. 25 Training in Relevant Assessment Techniques

	% Reponses				
	Overall	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
Yes, training received	38	25	47	31	43
No training	62	75	53	69	67
(Missing cases = 1)					

Sources of such training were quoted as components of initial training courses, courses in psychology which had included relevant aspects of assessment, and inservice courses.

Overall, only 9% of our tutors were completely satisfied with their knowledge of appropriate methods of assessment for their students, 27% were "fairly satisfied", 33% "not completely satisfied" and 30% "not satisfied". The breakdown of these figures by course types is shown in Fig. 26, indicating that the highest levels of satisfaction appear to be among General Education course tutors—perhaps because assessment techniques relating to basic

Fig. 26 Satisfaction with Current Knowledge of Appropriate Methods of Assessment

	% Reponses				
	Overall	*General Education (1)*	*Work Introduction (2)*	*Combined Courses (3)*	*Link Courses (4)*
Completely satisfied	10	13	3	19	17
Fairly satisfied	27	38	38	13	0
Not completely satisfied	33	25	34	31	33
Not satisfied	30	25	25	38	50
(Missing cases = 1)					

academic skills are better developed than those relating to vocational assessment for this group of students. Tutors on Link courses expressed the greatest dissatisfaction (83% not satisfied or not completely satisfied), which is surprising in view of the relative length of time that such courses have been established, while Combined course tutors also expressed quite a high level of dissatisfaction (69% not satisfied or not completely satisfied) which might be more expected, given the relatively new standing of many of these courses, and the fact that a proportionately higher number of tutors on these courses have little specialized teaching experience (see above).

Fig. 27 on page 30 shows the responses of tutors to our question concerning ways in which they would like to improve their knowledge and understanding of assessment procedures. This shows that those on Link courses and Combined courses most often requested additional advice from "outside" agencies such as the FEU. Many staff wanted opportunities to meet or visit those in other colleges, to find out what was being done—but, as our survey shows, this need was felt less by tutors on Work Introduction courses than those on other types of courses (4). Those on Link courses were most keen on improving collaboration with schools (7) while better collaboration with the specialist careers officer was a low priority for all groups, reflecting the fact that in many cases, this is the strongest link in the chain between school, college and "the outside world".

52% of all our tutors did not forsee the need to change their assessment procedures in the light of the

Fig. 27 Factors in Improving Knowledge of Assessment Techniques

	Overall	General Education (1)	Work Introduction (2)	Combined Courses (3)	Link Courses (4)
1. More guidance from e.g. FEU	47	38	36	63	67
2. More guidance from other professionals	38	38	36	38	50
3. More consultation with other staff in college	20	38	12	12	50
4. Opportunities to communicate with staff in other colleges	56	75	46	63	67
5. Receiving training or further training in assessment procedures	55	75	52	50	50
6. More support from college and/or Local Administration	14	25	9	19	17
7. Better collaboration with schools	19	25	12	25	33
8. Better collaboration with medical personnel	16	25	9	25	17
9. Better collaboration with social work personnel	20	25	21	19	17
10. Better collaboration with speicialist careers officer	13	13	9	19	17
11. Other	8	0	7	13	17

(Missing cases = 0)

current social and economic climate, but 36% mentioned their concern with increasing unemployment and the need to develop in the area of "education for leisure", "significant living without work" etc. They felt that this would alter their aims and objectives and thus their assessment procedures. 5% mentioned other reasons for changing, such as changes in the nature of their student group or other matters relating to the structure and content of the course.

5.1 Case Study 1

(i) *Background*

The first case-study took place at a college drawing on a wide catchment area in the North of England. The college is situated in a pleasant rural area but within reach of several sizable towns. It has made provision for handicapped students since 1969, and current provision takes the form of a large (local authority funded) Work Orientation Unit to which students with varying types and degrees of special needs are admitted. About 160 students can be accomodated, of which the majority have previously attended a special school or unit, while the rest have come from ordinary schools, home, hospital or from being unemployed. Over three-quarters of all students are initially referred by the specialist careers officer, while others are referred by their school teachers (in the case of Link course students), the Social Services, Probation Service, parents or voluntary organizations. About 100 students in the unit come into our target group.

(ii) *Description of Courses Offered*

Courses are offered at three levels to students with special needs, and the rationale behind this is set out in the Information booklet produced by the college and included in Appendix 5, pages 71–103. It will be seen on page 73 that courses are offered at varying levels of "integration" with mainstream college activities, with Level 1 representing full secondment to an appropriate department with specialist back-up where required, Level 2 representing partial secondment plus a greater degree of specialist support, and Level 3 representing courses specially designed for students who cannot aspire to Levels 1 and 2. However, the possibility of moving from Level 3 to Level 2 is kept open at all times.

Fig. 28 is taken from the college information booklet (page 74) but is reproduced here for the sake of clarity, and illustrates the content of Level 3 courses:

Fig. 28. Level 3 (specially designed courses) 2+ years

Vocational Area	*Social Development*	*Educational*
Operative training Workshop	Functional social education programme	Functional literacy and numeracy in support of vocational work
Sample Vocational Courses	Recreational/ leisure courses	
Limited Skills Courses		
Work Experience		

Placement in Work or Sheltered Workshop/ATC, etc.

The flexible curriculum allows courses to be planned individually depending upon the student's needs, and the course will last for approximately two years, again depending upon the amount of time required by the individual.

(iii) *Aims of the Course*

The college regards every student entering a Level 3 course as a "potential employee", while recognizing the need for education for "significant living without employment" as well. The Work Orientation Unit aims "to help student adjust to industrial life, not to train them for particular trades or crafts." However, having attended a "sample vocational course" in which he or she is introduced to a number of broad areas (e.g. engineering, catering, fashion and home management, etc.) the student may receive a "limited skills training course", focusing on specific training. The aim of the workshop element of the course is to remove the difference between the student's "base-line" work behaviour and an "acceptable" level of work behaviour, and workshop experience can be followed up by work experience with local firms where this is felt to be desirable. The aim of the social development component of the course is also to effect behavioural change while the General Education component aims "to change the motivational basis of general education from an extrinsic to an intrinsic one" through basing education on reality and first-hand experience.

(iv) *Pre-Entry Assessment*

(a) *Link Course Students*

The college offers Link courses of about 2 half-days per week for final year school students who appear likely to progress to a full-time course at the college. These students are selected by their own class teachers and come from three "feeder" schools or other schools in various nearby counties. The contact between schools and the college may be direct between the class teacher and course tutor, or it may be mediated by the Head of the Work Orientation Unit. The staff of the unit wish to develop Link courses further.

(b) *Post-School Students*

Post-School students may be referred to the Work Orientation Unit via a number of sources (see above). Pre-entry assessment takes the form of a detailed application form and an interview. The application form (see Appendix 5,

pages 78–88) consists of five sections: General Information, Educational Information, Social Information, Medical Information and Vocational Information. Each section is completed by the relevant individual or body: i.e. school, social worker, doctor and careers officer. The careers officer acts as "named person" in co-ordinating all applications for students referred through the careers office. Parental authority is sought before the application form is completed.

The application form, as can be seen, attempts to provide background information about most relevant areas of the student's life, and includes subsections for information on students with physical, visual, and auditory handicaps, and epilepsy. The concern with the student's medical history is probably greater in a unit such as this, where fitness for some form of work experience is desirable, and where workshop supervisors need to be aware of any medical problems in advance.

An interview between the student and the future college tutor, held at the college but sometimes at the school, is the next stage of initial assessment. Furthermore, the college may administer literacy, numeracy or intelligence tests where information available is felt to be insufficient (Ravens Matrices, the Schonell Basic Reading Test, Vernon's Arithmetic Test and the Neale Analysis are examples of those used). It is hoped, however, that such tests will in future be carried out in the school, preferably by the class teacher.

The main problems with initial assessment, as seen by the unit staff, are that schools are sometimes unrealistic in their aspirations for their pupils, and may make recommendations which are not feasible; additionally, even though the unit has been established for 13 years, many referrals are made so late that there is not enough time for thorough assessment.

(v) *In-Course Assessment*

Pages 88–90 illustrate how information is abstracted from the initial assessment process and used to complete a Basic Student Record form (page 90) and a Staff Information form (pages 88–89). The staff information form provides a brief summary of the student's physical disabilities (if any), I.Q., emotional maturity, social skills and family background. The Basic Student Record form consists of three sections and besides general information concerning dates of college attendance, placements, etc. provides a term-by-term record of the results of literacy, numeracy, laterality and differential aptitude tests, with a further page dealing with social development. This records the student's level of emotional and social maturity on entry to the unit and leaves room for further comments. Week-by-week assessment is made of student progress in various areas, which will be discussed below.

As will be noted from the Basic Student Record form, acceptance into the unit can be conditional upon a successful "trial period", generally of about 4–6 weeks, and in all cases this initial period serves as a period of assessment to obtain information about the difference between the student's "base-line" level of work behaviour and an "acceptable" level of work behaviour. A programme of training objectives will then be written aiming to remove that difference. The student will also attend the classes in general education and social education.

Pages 94–95 illustrate the checklists used by the course tutor in charge of literacy and social education to record, each lesson, what topics have been covered by each student, and to make comments on individual progress. Pages 96–98 show how assessments are recorded for social education and in the operative workshop. Both these forms use a five-point rating scale, in which 1 represents Excellent, 2 Good, 3 Satisfactory, 4 Poor and 5 Unsatisfactory. Twice termly, all tutors concerned with an individual student are asked to return their assessments, and the information is collated by the student's personal tutor and recorded on the Student Progress Record (page 99). Both the Student Progress Record, and the more detailed month-by-month assessment record which is also kept (pages 100–102) are concerned with rating the students on Reliability (1), Application (2), Progress (3), Ability (4) and Potential (5). These categories, and indeed the entire assessment process, have been developed through group discussion amongst the staff. However, there is now some feeling that there is too much categorization on the assessment sheets, and that terms such as "reliability" and "application" are not clearly defined. In rating the students on a five-point scale, it should be noted that evaluations of "good", "poor" etc. are intended to be made in terms of the student's *own* potential, but this is perhaps not recognized by all staff, reducing the validity of the technique.

(vi) *End-Of-Course Assessment*

The record sheets described above provide a cumulative

assessment record, and the idea of a "leaving certificate" is currently under discussion. This would list the main areas covered by the student while at the unit and would comment on his/her attendance and conduct. A case-conference is held in the early Spring of the student's second year, to which the careers officer, the student and his or her parents are invited, in order to draw up plans for the last few months of the course, and beyond.

(vii) *General Comments*

This case study illustrates how assessment plays an important role in helping to place students, at varying levels of integration, into mainstream college courses. At the moment, pre-course assessment involves the use of formal tests for post-school students, but the tutors are hopeful that, in future, pre-course assessment could be conducted largely by the school. Discontinuity between school and college emerges as a problem in our study, and the tutors at this college are aware of this problem. One approach to a solution in this particular case might be to extend the "trial period" which forms the basis of initial assessment for the Work Orientation Unit back into assessment procedures carried out towards the end of the school year, so that there would be continuity from the point of view of both staff (in school and college), and students.

5.2 Case Study 2

(i) *Background*

Case Study 2 took place in a large, modern and well-equipped college of further education in a suburb of a Midlands city. The college offers a wide range of vocational and general educational courses, and the Department of Social and Community Services runs a number of courses admitting students with special needs. These students are housed in the main college buildings and have access to the full range of college facilities.

(ii) *Description of Courses*

The course admitting students in our target group which has been longest established at the college is the Young Persons' Work Preparation Course, which has been running for 10 years. This is now funded by the Manpower Services Commission and is linked with a nearby Employment Rehabilitation Centre. It lasts 12–14 weeks on average. The General Education and Vocational Training Course for Young Persons with Special Needs, which is subdivided into two courses for students of slightly different ability ranges, has been established for about three years and is funded by the local education authority. Finally, there is a Manpower Services Commission Work Introduction Course, which is a "rolling" course, generally lasting about 13 weeks for each student. All the above courses cater for post-school students.

(iii) *Assessment Procedures*

(a) *Young Persons Work Preparation Course*

The original impetus for this course came from the lack of general education facilities at the nearby Employment Rehabilitation Centre (ERC), which led to a link with the college for this purpose. Nowadays the course is based at the ERC, and is staffed by 6 workshop supervisors and two education tutors from the college who "service" the course for the education input. The course is of particular interest since its purpose *is* assessment. It is a short course, clearly orientated towards employment, and its main function is to assess young people with special needs for employment purposes. Because of this, according to the course tutor, "workshop assessment is of prime importance and education assessment plays only a secondary role".

About a dozen students were attending the course, and about three-quarters of these had attended a special school. A good relationship obtains with local schools, and prospective students are able to visit the ERC. Placement on the course is decided upon by a team including the workshop supervisor, course tutor, social worker, careers officer and occupational psychologist. The main criterion for accepting a student onto the course would be his or her ultimate "employability", and a student felt to be unemployable would not be admitted. It was noted that the attachment of a social worker to the ERC had been very helpful, particularly in facilitating relationships with the students' parents. The occupational psychologist plays an extremely important role, testing students on entry and making final recommendations on the basis of information supplied by the workshop supervisors and education tutors. The ultimate decision as to whether a student is admitted rests with the psychologist.

Initial assessment involves the administration of vari-

ous tests by the occupational psychologist and the education tutors. Among those used are Raven's Matrices, the Spar Reading Test, the Vernon mathematics test, Literacy Diagnostic Tests (the Phonic Blend System, designed for adults), and a spelling test devised by the education tutors. Two weeks after initial assessment, a case-conference is held to discuss each student, bearing in mind his or her future employment prospects. On the basis of initial assessment, an individual programme is drawn up setting out literacy, numeracy and work objectives for each student.

During the course, one-to-one weekly progress assessment interviews are held between the student and tutor, and "log books" of progress are kept. If there are students with particular problems, the staff may hold a case-conference midway through the course to discuss these. A case-conference is held for all students two weeks before they leave. At the end of the course, formal tests (described above) are again carried out, and the occupational psychologist makes final recommendations, taking into account information from the workshop supervisors and course tutors. The student's personality and social skills are also taken into account before recommendations are made.

General Comments

As stated, on this course assessment is a major aim in itself. However, this assessment is, at the moment, heavily influenced by the purely "work-related" aims and objectives of the course. These aims and objectives depend to a great extent on the policies of the Manpower Services Commission, which funds the course. Assessment is geared to the demands of employers, and relies heavily on formal testing. For example, the results of numeracy tests are seen as particularly important by employers in the engineering field. The important role of the occupational psychologist in vocational testing and making recommendations about students' future potential and placement is another reflection of the strongly vocational slant of the curriculum. However, the course tutor interviewed was not happy with the appropriateness of all the tests used, particularly when used in a diagnostic capacity for initial assessment, and would like to see methods of student profiling and checklists developed and implemented.

(b) *General Education and Vocational Training Course for Young Persons*

This course is subdivided into two: Group A and Group B. In total, there are about 20 full-time and a few part-time students. The first group caters for students with more severe learning difficulties, and those from the lower ability range of our target group, also including those with slight physical handicap. The second group caters for students in the middle to higher ability range of our target group, together with a number of physically handicapped students.

The course, which has been running for three years, developed through contact with schools and the organisation of link classes for 4th and 5th year pupils, in which those from special schools were included as an experiment. It is now a post-school course, although the senior course tutor is also link course organiser for other courses in the department, and tries to establish contact with prospective students in special schools before they enter the college. This would take place about 3 to 6 months before the student's entry to the college.

Assessment for placement is made initially by the specialist careers officer, who provides the college with any information required—this is not obtained directly from school. However, although information is not always detailed enough, there is no problem of access to records. The specialist careers officer acts as co-ordinator for student applications, and also follows students through their course. Since more students may be sent for interview to the college than can be admitted, there is an element of selection involved at this stage, and criteria for rejecting a prospective student would be similar to those in many other colleges in our survey: social factors such as a history of disruptive or delinquent behaviour, "incompatibility with the group", a bad attendance record, or inability to travel to college independently. The overall compatibility of the group is seen as a particularly important factor, since one of the main aims of the course is the development of social skills. A timetable for Group B is included in Appendix 6 (page 104), which illustrates the balance of the curriculum between vocational subjects such as industrial sewing, horticulture and workshop activities, and "life skills" classes, which include aspects of literacy and numeracy which are relevant to the social and vocational aims of the course.

On the whole, the course tutors are satisfied with the pre-entry assessment procedure, and the role taken by

the specialist careers officer in this. During their first week at college, students take various formal tests in reading, numeracy, and manual dexterity in practical subjects. Tests used include the Spar Reading Test, Vernon Mathematics Test and Ravens Matrices. This information, together with school records, is used to assess students' "base-line" levels and to suggest curricular aims and objectives. Assessment during the course consists at present of the keeping of progress reports, a copy of which is included in Appendix 6 (page 105), and these reports are collated and used at case-conferences and progress meetings, which are attended by the specialist careers officer. Students from this course generally go on to YOPS courses or to further training, for example in horticulture, on other courses. Few go directly into open employment. Some will go on to adult training centres. Towards the end of the course, further formal tests may be carried out to assess the progress made, in addition to the progress reports given by all the student's tutors. This assessment is used both to aid in the decision-making process about the student's future placement, and to evaluate the appropriateness of the course curriculum.

General Comments

In the future, the two groups of students on this course will be amalgamated, and there will be a need for revision of the current curriculum and assessment techniques. At least one of the course tutors is not happy with the appropriateness of formal testing, and profiling methods are under active consideration. The tutors feel the need for methods of assessment which are an integral part of the coursework, which are easy to administer, and which are interesting to the students. However, there is concern about the amount of time which might be taken up by assessment, a point to which we refer in our discussion (Section VI). The Gunzberg Progress Assessment Charts are seen as the most appropriate published material available which might offer a new approach to assessment, and these are in fact used by other colleges in our study. However, as the tutors have noted, these were designed for the assessment of students of a lower ability range than those in our target group, which raises many questions about their applicability to courses such as the one described here. The tutors on this course would welcome guidelines on developing new approaches to assessment from which they could create or adapt methods appropriate to their particular situation, a view echoed by many other tutors in our survey.

(c) *Work Introduction Course*

The WIC course at this college is more fully described in the college leaflet included in Appendix 6 (pages 106–108), but will be summarized here. The course admits about 12 students, and although the college leaflet states that there is provision for "up to 3 or 4 ESN(M) students", in fact all students attending the course at the time of the case study fell into this category. The aims of the course are as follows:

1. To prepare the students for full integration into society, by reaching out towards their maximum potential.
2. To prescribe adequately the necessary training in order to achieve the skills, aptitudes, interests and personal-social attitudes for acceptable functioning in open employment.
3. To effect adequate careers guidance in conjunction with the Careers Service, Disablement Resettlement Officer, employer, and other interested agencies.

Thus, although this is basically a work-orientated course, education "for life" is also seen as an important aim by the course tutor, particularly since few, if any, students are currently going directly into employment after the course. Nevertheless, the general outline of the course is influenced by the policies of the Manpower Services Commission, by which is is funded, and the syllabus and areas of assessment (described on page 106), reflect its concern with vocational aptitudes and preferences. Objectives are defined in a number of vocational areas such as woodwork, metalwork, typing, catering, etc., and the objective in the "life and social skills" component of the course (page 107) is largely concerned with developing the social skills required to obtain and retain employment.

Initial assessment is undertaken by the specialist careers officer, the college staff and the staff of the Training Services Division of the MSC, all of whom interview the prospective student. The final decision as to whether a student is to be admitted rests with the course tutor, who takes into account information from the school, obtained through the specialist careers officer. Once again, the main reason for rejecting a student would be behaviour problems, especially to the extent to which these would upset the balance of the group. Assessment then takes place during the early stages of the course in order to determine training needs, and this "forms the

basis for planning the subsequent progress of the trainees through the course" (see page 106). Ravens Matrices are used, and profiling techniques are in the process of being developed to enable assessment to be made of a wide range of areas, including educational and vocational abilities, aptitudes and preferences, personal and temperamental qualities (see page 106 for further details). At the moment assessment is ongoing and informal, and a student profile sheet supplied by the careers office is completed for each student before he or she leaves, but this will be superseded by the new profiling system mentioned above, which is currently being planned. Once again, the amount of time taken by assessment is seen as a problem, but nevertheless, it is felt that more and better assessment techniques are needed. In particular, it is felt that the assessment of work skills at this stage is not as helpful as the assessment of attitudes towards work, since training in work skills will be extended by the employer in any case, and few students are actually going into employment.

General Comments

As with the previous course described, the course tutor sees a need for new approaches to assessment to be developed. This will again involve the gradual replacement of a more "traditional" system of formal testing plus informal, personal monitoring by a structured profiling technique which will form an integral part of the course curriculum, and besides providing feedback to tutor and student, will offer a basis for curriculum evaluation. The need to broaden the basis of assessment to take into account the future placement of the student, which may not be in employment, is also recognized, and a new system will focus on attitudes to work as well as competence in various work skills.

(d) *General Comments on the Courses Discussed Above*

The preceding paragraphs illustrate how this particular college is finding itself moving towards new aims and objectives in its provision for students with moderate learning difficulties, and how the need for correspondingly new assessment procedures is being recognized. Even in the case of the Work Preparation and Work Introduction courses, where the aims are almost exclusively "vocational", the movement towards a broader, and more flexible system for assessing students, which does not rely so heavily on formal tests, is taking place. It is interesting to note that new approaches to assessment always involve its greater integration into the course curriculum, and it is to be hoped that this in turn will lead to its being used as a means of curriculum evaluation and planning.

5.3 Case Study 3

(i) *Background*

Case study 3 took place at a large, urban college in South London. The college, which is situated in a multi-racial area with high unemployment, has admitted students with special needs since about 1972, when the demise of more "traditional", higher-level work in F.E. left the college with specialist facilities (e.g. in engineering) which were not being used. The arrival of literacy support referral work, together with the personal commitment of individual staff members and the problems of the area in which the college is situated, led to further development of work with students with special needs. This is based in the Department of General Education.

(ii) *Description of Courses Offered*

The longest-established of the courses for students with special needs at this college are the Special School Link courses, of which there are four. Two of these, courses A and B, cater mainly for students in our target group, most of whom are described as "relatively able" in the college information leaflet on link courses (see Appendix 7). The maximum number of students on each course is 12, with the aim of 50% boys and 50% girls, and each student attends college for one day per week.

The college also offers a one year, full-time, post-school General Education course, funded by the local education authority. There are about 22 students, half of whom fall into our target group.

Finally, there is a Youth Opportunities Programme/ Community Industry Link course at the college, which is part-time and funded by the Manpower Services Commission. This is a 12 week course, but some students "roll-on and roll-off". About 16 out of 100 students on this course fall into our target group.

(iii) *Assessment Procedures*

(a) *Link Courses*

The curriculum followed on the two Link courses which admit students in our target group is described in the college information leaflet (pages 109–110), but will be summarized here. On their day in college, students attend two hours of classes in social and life skills, careers and tutorials; one hour in basic manipulative skills; and two hours in "tasters", which involve gaining experience in work skills in areas such as woodwork, retail/reception, needlework, etc.

The general aims of the courses are set out on pages 109–110, and will not be reproduced here, but it can be seen that the courses combine the aims of preparation for adult social life as well as for working life.

At the moment, the college has links with quite a large number of schools, some of which are outside the local area, but do not have well-developed links with further education colleges in their own areas. However, the course tutor emphasized that the "quality" of the link with schools was far more important than the "quantity", and that he would prefer to reduce the number of links and develop better relationships. Before entry to the course, the school teacher and the student each fill in an application form, and discussions are held with the school head and class teacher, who have initially recommended a student for placement. The course tutor has found that information from teachers concerning individual students can be biased, depending upon their reasons for wanting an F.E. placement for the student. To help overcome this problem, he has over the past few years organized twice-termly school-college link conferences, at which teachers can air their views openly and generally without reference to individual students.

Although the assessment carried out by the college prior to the student's entry onto a Link course is described as being "very slight", the Link course itself is seen as a form of assessment, and one of its objectives is to introduce the student to potential course tutors on post-school college courses, with a view to subsequent placement. Other objectives are to introduce students to a new social environment, allowing them to "practise" social and life skills using the college as a resource, and to improve communication skills, while not overlapping with school literacy programmes. Assessment during the course is seen as being "related to the learning experience . . . . . there is little or no attempt made to distinguish between teaching and testing". The use of published tests was considered, but rejected, since it was felt that assessment methods should come out of the work being done with the students, and reflect curricular aims. Assessment is seen as having two major functions: firstly, to benefit the student by providing feedback, and secondly, to help collate information on the student's progress which can be passed on to appropriate course tutors, helping to break down the "blanket" entry procedures to other, post-school courses, and to facilitate appropriate placement for individual students on such courses.

Together with other members of the college staff, the course tutor is in the process of developing an assessment form for Link course students, which would fulfil the criteria described above, and which would also be used to report back to schools. The school would complete a parallel form, and any discrepancy between the two would, in itself, provide useful information to both student, school teachers and F.E. tutors, by allowing the student's behaviour to be compared in different contexts. The form will aim to cover areas such as numeracy skills, communication skills, practical and manipulative skills, and social skills (e.g. confidence, ability to relate to others, etc.). This form would also serve the purpose described above, of meeting the demands of prospective tutors on post-school courses at the college for information about the student. However, the course tutor is aware that not all students will move on to other college courses, and that the form and content of the new assessment method should take account of this.

Currently, the specialist careers officer is not closely involved with the assessment of Link course students, but the course tutor would like there to be a closer connection, since someone in a position to make an "overall" assessment could be of benefit to the student.

(b) *General Education Course*

This course admits students who are referred by their school teachers or by their parents, or who have attended the Special Schools Link course at the college (see above). All students, except those from the Link course, have to take college literacy and numeracy tests, although the course tutor feels that these can "minimize or obliterate abilities applicants have". A revised version of the test procedure is shortly to be introduced, which will aim to be more objective; however, the course tutor sees a major

drawback of such testing to be that it tests attainment, rather than aptitude. On the whole, the results of these tests provide less information which will help to suggest curricular aims for individual students than do the college application form and the interview conducted with each student. The course tutor is not in favour of building up strong links with students before they commence the course, as this might result in "preconceived ideas", and prefers to make his own personal assessment of students. As with many of the courses in our survey, criteria for rejecting a prospective student would be largely based on social factors (e.g. "students who do not see the point of the course for them"), although there is also some emphasis on basic literacy and numeracy skills—students who require "heavy tuition" in these areas are not accepted.

The general aim of the course is to enable students to "understand themselves in the context of the world", and group methods are used to encourage participation and build confidence. Emotional and social aspects of the curriculum are seen as being interrelated with the educational, and the course includes work experience with local employers. Assessment is seen as having two functions: one for the students, the other for outside observers (employers, parents, careers officers, etc.). The course tutor sees assessment for the student's benefit as "a cognitive tool which they can take with them and use after college". At the moment this is achieved by means of progress reports from each member of staff who teaches the student, at the end of the first term and at the end of the year. This is given to the student and discussed in detail; it also "allows outsiders to know what strides the student has made". However, the tutor sees lack of time as a drawback which can lead to oversimplification in the reporting and recording of progress, thus weakening feedback to students. Furthermore, there are not enough opportunities for the course team to co-ordinate their assessments of students.

Examinations also have a role to play in assessment on this course, since students take the City and Guilds Numeracy and the RSA English examinations in their final term. Although the course tutor feels that the course should not put students under stress by the use of examinations, there is nevertheless a need for some "concrete" form of assessment, for both students and prospective employers.

For this particular course, it was felt that a simple profile technique of assessment would not be relevant, and that the time and resources were not available at the moment to develop a sophisticated student profile. However, this was thought to be a desirable aim, providing such a profile could offer feedback to students while still providing the kind of information employers wish to know. One solution to this might be to have a separate assessment form for employers.

(c) *YOPs/CIL Course*

Selection of students for the YOPs/CIL course is not made by the college. Students are referred by the Training Services Division through the specialist careers officer, who supplies information to the course tutor. Students take the standard college literacy and numeracy tests on entry to the course, and are divided into groups on the basis of ability. Although early assessment is considered very useful, the course tutor feels that tests can be "alienating".

The course curriculum covers areas such as social and life skills, communication studies, literacy and numeracy, with an option of a practical "multi-skills" course. This is not related to the students' work placement. Assessment at the moment is "largely informal", but there are regular meetings with the MSC Training Officer to discuss individual students' progress. A Progress Report Form is completed which is useful to the YOP training supervisors, but is not felt to be particularly useful to the student—the course tutor would like to see methods developed which include an element of self-assessment, and which would help students to feel more involved in the process of assessment.

There is no separate end-of-course assessment procedure, with the exception of a few selected students who may take examinations (e.g. TSD test in Electronic Wiring). In most cases, the course tutor does not know where the students will be placed after the course, and this has a "frustrating" effect on attempts to devise suitable assessment techniques.

In the view of the course tutor, the need for "thorough assessment" will only increase as YOPs courses are rebuilt on a one-year traineeship basis, and the development of new methods of assessment is under active consideration. Within the college, a working party has been set up to study profiling techniques.

(iv) *General Comments*

The case study at this college illustrates three different types of courses, yet shows how, in all three cases, the need for change and development in assessment procedures is being expressed. On the Link course, the development of new methods is most advanced, and the importance of assessment as an integral part of the teaching process is being recognized and acted upon. The General Education course still relies to some extent on testing and examinations, and although a profile technique is seen as a desirable aim, it is thought to require more time and resources than can be spared. We shall return to this problem in our Discussion (Section VI). As mentioned in connection with the YOPs/CIL course (see above), tutors at this college are responding to the need for the development of new methods of assessment by forming a working party to study profiling techniques.

5.4 Case Study 4

(i) *Background*

Case Study 4 took place at a fairly large college situated in a country town in the South of England. The Education and Training for Low Achievers (ETLA) course at this college is one of two such courses which were authorized by the Local Education Authority in 1979 and introduced into two colleges. Reports on the course in its first two years, 1979–80 and 1980–81, appear in Appendix 8 (pages 112–114). The course, which admits about 15 students at the moment, is situated in an annexe of the main college about one mile away, but is officially part of the Department of General and Communication Studies. The main college offers a full range of courses, but there is little if any contact between students on the ETLA course and those on other college courses. The course is LEA funded.

(ii) *Description of Course*

The two reports on the course, mentioned above, which appear in Appendix 8, will give more detailed information about the aims and content of the course, but these will be summarized here.

(a) *Target Group*. In both its first two years, the course admitted students from the "middle band" of ESN school leavers. The upper band of leavers is defined by the reports as those who are "easily assimilated into the general population", while those in the lower band "are unlikely to hold down jobs and will probably stay at home or go to training centres". The middle band are "those who fall between the two groups and might 'make it' with extra aid".

(b) *Aims*. The basic aim of the course is to provide the "extra aid" mentioned in the previous paragraph, with the eventual goal of employment. However, the 1980–81 report notes that the unemployment situation has affected this to some extent. The main aim of the curriculum structure is stated to be: to raise self-esteem (a) at college, (b) at home, (c) at work, and (d) with friends.

(c) *Curriculum*. The aims set out above are approached through a curriculum which includes literacy, numeracy, sport, motor skills, simulated workshop experience, work experience and education for unemployment. A wide variety of activities takes place under these general headings, and these are listed on page 114.

(iii) *Assessment Procedures*

(a) *Pre-Entry Assessment*

Much of the assessment carried out on this course is informal, personal assessment by the course tutor, as well as a student record form which allows comments on development during the course. (A copy of this is to be found on pages 115–116.) However, the main feature of interest to our study is the pre-entry assessment procedure, which is co-ordinated by the specialist careers officer for the county and takes the form of an Assessment Day. This is fully described on pages 116–118 but will summarized here.

A feeling that school reports were often insufficient had led members of the Careers Service into discussing methods of assessing school leavers whose placement after school might be difficult to decide. The idea of an Assessment Day was originally conceived and planned by the specialist careers officer, educational psychologist and Adviser in Special Education for the county. The first Assessment Day was held in 1977, and they have been held regularly ever since. It was decided that by giving pupils the opportunity to tackle practical activities in a strange environment, a wide range of skills and social relationships could be observed.

As described on page 116, two Assessment Days are held each year, each servicing three local schools. A total of twelve school pupils attend each Assessment Day (four from each school involved). Selection of the participants is the result of visits by the specialist careers officer, together with the local careers officer, to the schools concerned, to discuss possible candidates with the class and head teachers. The report completed by the school for the Careers Service is to be found on pages 122–125. Thus, a good deal of pre-selection takes place, on the basis that "obvious candidates for open employment or for the adult training centres . . . . . are not included" (see page 116).

Assessment Days are generally held at local Teachers' Centres, and the assessment team consists of eleven members of staff. Three of these are "permanent" year by year: the specialist careers officer, the educational psychologist, and the Principal Consultant, Day Care, Social Services. Other members of the assessment team are two further careers officers, 3 careers teachers (one from each participating school), and sometimes another educational psychologist. The course tutor at the college which is the subject of our case-study chooses not to attend, as he welcomes the "independent assessment", but the two part-time lecturers on the course act as members of the assessment team.

The Assessment Day is held during the Spring term, and parental authority is sought early in this term. No objections have ever been raised by parents to this scheme, and most take the opportunity to discuss their child's performance later in the term.

On arrival at the Centre where the Assessment Day is being held, each candidate is "paired" with one from another school, and stays with this partner as they move through a series of activities. These are not described as "tests", nor are they "passed" or "failed". Each consists of a task of some kind, which is presented to the pupils by a member of the assessment staff. After a short time each pair of pupils moves on to the next activity, until all have been completed. Members of the assessment staff remain with one task, while candidates move around.

The tasks involved come under 10 general headings, and are summarized here, while further explanation is given on page 117. The general nature of the tasks is as follows: (1) Template (2) Design (3) Money (4) Time (5) Measuring (6) Weighing (7) Sorting (8) Dexion (9) Packing (10) Terminals. Pupils are allowed 15 minutes to complete each task, except for Sorting and Dexion where 30 minutes are allowed. The tasks are not standardized, except that each is presented in precisely the same way to each candidate. It will be seen from the brief descriptions of the tasks in the Appendix, that these are practical activities, both manipulative and work-related, ranging from paper-and-pencil tasks (e.g. Template, Measuring, Design), to discriminatory tasks (e.g. Sorting), the use of real money, clocks and weights (e.g. Money, Time, Weighing), construction of three-dimensional objects (e.g. Dexion, Packing) and assembly tasks (e.g. Terminals). In addition, the candidates' social behaviour is assessed, throughout the day and particularly during the lunch-break.

Each member of the assessment staff records comments on each candidate's performance in a particular task, under the following headings:

(a) Independence (did the candidate need staff support?)
(b) Ability to follow instructions—verbal or demonstration
(c) Distractibility—or persistence
(d) Accuracy—ability to see errors and correct them
(e) Adaptability
(f) Attitude to tasks and staff member
(g) Sociability during the day, and
(h) Speech and communication.

The last two factors are especially observed during lunch and coffee breaks.

At a summing-up case-conference attended by all members of the assessment team after the candidates have been returned to their schools, each pupil is discussed individually while their own teachers comment on any differences in their behaviour as observed in school. Finally, a recommendation is made concerning the most appropriate "next step" for the pupil. In the past, recommendations varied quite widely, such as advice to remain at school, to attend an adult training centre, to attend adult literacy classes, to seek open or sheltered employment, and so forth. For a fuller description of potential recommendations, see page 118. However, according to the specialist careers officer and the course tutor, the college course has now become almost the only option available, and gradually the Assessment Day has become a means of selecting those possibly suitable to

attend college.

A copy of the specially designed form on which the results of the Assessment Day are recorded is shown on pages 119–121. The left-hand side of the form is completed by the school beforehand, and includes the results of a reading test and a mathematics check-list, besides various other items. The results of the Assessment Day are recorded on the right-hand side. Parents are invited to see the results and discuss any recommendations, and the form accompanies any application made for placement. This now usually means application to the college course, so the course tutor in charge is in receipt of a great deal of information concerning each of his students.

(b) *In-Course and End-of-Course Assessment*

The existence of a well-organized method of pre-entry assessment clearly influences the kind of assessment that needs to be carried out once the students are on the college course. Some of the advantages of this system will be described below (see General Comments). In our particular case-study, the Assessment Day has become a means of assessing only those students who are likely to attend the college course, and even at the stage of the Assessment Day their admission is almost a foregone conclusion, owing to the careful pre-selection that has already taken place in the schools.

The effects of this system are to provide the course tutor with an "independent assessment" of each student, including a fairly large amount of information on individual strengths and weaknesses. Beneficial side-effects are that the school and parents have been closely involved in the student's transition into F.E., and parents are viewed as being part of a "triangular relationship" between student, tutor and parents, in which all parties must work together. Contact with parents is maintained throughout the course, and their comments form part of the assessment process. This is mainly through individual re-appraisals of abilities, interests, experiences and work opportunities with the students. One of the main aims of the course is to raise self-esteem in a number of areas, and to assess this the Whelan & Speake Self-Esteem Questionnaire is now used. This is a good way of providing feedback to the students themselves. A student record form is kept to record progress during the course (pages 115–116). Assessment is cumulative and there is no formal end-of-course procedure; the Course Tutor believes that: "final assessment of people who read and write with difficulty and cannot remember things well or for long may have little value."

(iv) *General Comment*

The Assessment Day organised by the specialist careers service has some obvious advantages, some of which have already been mentioned above. Not least of these is the amount of contact, co-operation and exchange of information which is generated at this important transitional stage between the school, careers service, psychological and advisory services, and the college.

The implications of a system such as this one for the development of continuity in the assessment process, and in the curriculum of school and college, are far-reaching. A pre-entry Assessment Day, if devised with the joint co-operation of school, careers service, college and other bodies, could form the basis for detailed, individual curriculum planning, and subsequent assessment in the college. For example, it could provide a base for the development of a sophisticated, yet easily administered student profiling technique. It would seem that the possibilities of the approach described in this case-study have not yet been developed to their fullest extent.

VI Discussion

6.1 The Contribution of Assessment to the Education of Students with Special Needs in F.E.

Recent papers have discussed a number of educational aims as being relevant to students with moderate learning difficulties at F.E. level (see FEU 1982 b, and Bradley and Hegarty,1982). Relevant aims for our target group of students could include:

(i) Preparation for specific employment
(ii) Raising of pre-employment competencies, in general
(iii) Raising of competencies for further training
(iv) Raising of competencies for "significant living without work"
(v) Providing occupation for the duration of the F.E. course in the absence of other occupational alternatives
(vi) Increasing social and emotional maturity.

Differing aims will influence both the content and teaching methods of F.E. courses, and, in turn, the role of assessment on these courses. As mentioned in the literature review, assessment can be used in the following ways:

(i) Counselling for placement onto the course, and future placement
(ii) Monitoring progress during the course
(iii) As a basis for adapting teaching levels and methods
(iv) For curriculum evaluation and planning.

The tutors in our survey expressed the view that monitoring student progress, and the modification of teaching to suit individual needs were important functions of assessment throughout the F.E. course. However, they did not attach the same importance to the use of assessment in curriculum evaluation and planning. The exception to this finding was among tutors on General Education courses, but unfortunately our sample is too small to enable any firm conclusions to be drawn from this. At the end of the F.E. course, the use of assessment to predict future academic or employment potential in a generalized way was not seen as important, but assessment was thought to play an important role in decision-making about the student's future.

6.2 Assessment Orientations and Methods

As discussed in the Literature Review, two broad assessment orientations can be distinguished:

(i) Status determination, in which a student's status is assessed with respect to other students' performance (norm-referenced assessment).
(ii) Instructional improvement, in which a student's status is assessed with respect to a defined objective (criterion-referenced assessment).

Norm-referenced types of assessment are most useful for competitive selection of a fixed quota of students, and for resource allocation, neither of which are particularly relevant to our target group in F.E. Either orientation could be relevant for the purpose of educational and vocational counselling, depending upon the particular circumstances.

Criterion-referenced assessment is considered important for monitoring individual progress and for curriculum evaluation, and is especially relevant to our survey, where monitoring progress was seen as a major function of assessment. However, it was notable that curriculum evaluation was not seen as an equally important use of assessment by the majority of tutors in our survey.

One of the main outcomes of our study was the finding that assessment orientations are not always clearly defined and consistently applied. For example, the Schonell Graded Word Reading Test, which is a norm-referenced test, was used to monitor individual progress. Instead, a more direct assessment of reading attainment could be made by using a criterion-referenced approach, which would involve the attainment of individual objectives without reference to group norms. Another example involved the use of rating scales, in which it was not always clear whether or not rating levels and categories were intended to compare the individual student with others.

As discussed in the Literature Review, there are several requirements for adequate assessment depending on the assessment orientation. For example, in criterion-referenced assessment there is a need for specific detail in defining areas to be assessed. A problem that emerged in our findings was that some attempts at criterion-referenced assessment did not define content areas in specific detail. Another problem concerned the lack of awareness of the requirement for reliability of assessment, in particular the degree of agreement between different observers. This is especially important where profiles and inventories are used at the end of the course.

Our study highlighted a number of problems involved in the use of assessment, one of the most frequently cited

being the view that assessment can be very time-consuming. This can certainly be a problem, but effective teaching requires effective assessment methods, and time is well spent developing and using such methods. The initial development of methods using a criterion-referenced orientation takes time, but after this initial stage, administration can be manageable.

In order to reflect the wider social aims of education at F.E. level, broader forms of assessment are needed. For example, when aims involve the development of social skills, assessment may need to be based on observation and role-play rather than traditional paper-and-pencil performance tests. Our study highlighted the importance attached to the development of social skills on F.E. courses for students in our target group. Although it also showed that there is a relatively little use of "formal" tests and examinations, a somewhat greater use of check-lists and similar techniques, and a predominant use of personal, "informal" assessment, relatively little information was yielded about any really innovative methods such as those mentioned above. However, some examples did emerge of the assessment of basic skills within different social contexts, such as in personal relationships, in the community and in the workshop. Certain colleges have included student self-assessment methods in their assessment procedures, and this could encourage greater student involvement in achieving the aims of the course.

6.3 Assessment Specifications at Different Stages of F.E.

(a) *Pre-Entry Assessment*

As mentioned in the Literature Review, the extension of provision at F.E. level for students with special needs allows, at least potentially, greater scope for continuity of education. Progression from school involves less need for long-term predictions about students, and more need for immediate decisions based on sensitive evaluations across a range of relevant dimensions. Thus, if there is to be greater continuity in the curriculum between school and college, greater continuity of assessment methods is implied.

A large proportion of colleges in our survey had very limited contact with their prospective students, which raises questions about the continuity of provision and assessment. The survey showed the reliance placed by many colleges on the judgement of the specialist careers officer concerning the suitability of the course for the student, and one of our case studies showed one way in which the specialist careers service is capable of co-ordinating the students' transition from school to F.E., with the involvement of both school and college. On the basis of the findings, it appears that the specialist careers officer often plays a major role in the assessment of students for placement on F.E. courses. This is reflected in the low proportion of course tutors who see themselves selecting students according to well-established course specifications.

We may conclude from this that there is a need for a closer investigation of the relative contribution of the referring school, the parents, the specialist careers officer and the F.E. course tutor in pre-course assessment, although it is recognized that there will be many individual variations. The need for this investigation arises because the type of assessment currently made for placement on a course is not necessarily integrated with the assessment of a student's curricular needs. This latter type of assessment is most appropriately conducted by those who will actually be teaching the student on the course. Assessment with respect to curricular objectives would take the form of criterion-referenced assessment. At the moment, our study showed that in some cases, a clear distinction is not always made between norm- and criterion-referenced orientations, with the result that norm-referenced tests may sometimes be used for criterion-referenced purposes (i.e. selecting curricular goals).

Another finding emerged from our survey which is related to the points made above concerning the role of the college in pre-course assessment. This was that although a large proportion of colleges in our survey did have a "named person" who was responsible for co-ordinating matters pertaining to students with special needs, this person did not always play a part in pre-course assessment. The role of the "named person" would need further definition in relation to the referring school, specialist careers officer and F.E. course tutor, as described above.

Some of the problems involved in obtaining sufficient and accurate information on prospective students from their schools, as expressed by tutors in our survey, could clearly be improved by greater co-ordination and communication between school and college. This is high-

lighted by the fact that Link course tutors tend to encounter these problems more rarely. Greater communication is facilitated, and genuine continuity between school and college becomes a practical proposition, with the introduction of Link courses, especially when these are held with a view to the student's placement on a post-school full-time course.

One further finding concerning the school-college relationship which emerged from our study was that school records were not always available or used, and medical records even less so. The opportunity for F.E. tutors to hold discussions with school staff was also not universally available. It is apparent that the development of greater continuity between the school and college will require a mutual willingness to make available any information which would facilitate the student's transition from school to F.E.

(b) *Assessment During the Course*

The major aims of assessment during the course emerged as:

(i) monitoring student progress

and

(ii) adapting teaching to meet individual needs in the light of student progress.

Without conducting a more detailed survey, it is not possible to ascertain how this works in practice, and to what extent assessment is used as an integral part of the teaching process, as discussed in the Literature Review.

The assessment of literacy and numeracy appears from the survey to be more important during the course than prior to it but this could be partly due to the fact that the college itself is not always involved in the assessment of literacy and numeracy at the pre-course stage, leaving this to the school or specialist careers services. Social skills, particularly with reference to the ability of the student to contribute to the group, are still considered very important. Manual dexterity is considered important by a high proportion of all tutors, particularly those on Work Introduction and Combined courses, and, as mentioned in Section IV, this implies that more careful consideration should be given to motor skills at the pre-course assessment stage, in order to facilitate careful curriculum planning for individual students.

(c) *End-of-Course Assessment*

Our survey showed that at the end of the course, assessment is most commonly used to provide a summary of course progress, as would be expected. It is also used by about three-quarters of all tutors as a decision-making aid about the student's future placement. This raises the question as to whether assessment made in relation to course aims and objectives can be used in decision-making about the student's future.

If assessment of course progress is to be used in the decision-making process, different dimensions of assessment will be emphasized, depending upon the range of opportunities that are available to the student. For example, the suitability of a student for open employment may still be relevant in some cases, even where employment opportunities appear very limited, and this is a consideration to be taken into account along with suitability for further training, education or sheltered employment.

Some tutors have felt the need to develop a leaving profile or record, and this would need to take into account a broad range of dimensions on which the student might need to be assessed. Some of the issues raised and methods developed in the construction of a profile for secondary school leavers (Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1977) are of relevance in this situation. See also *Profiles* (FEU, 1982a)

(d) *Summary*

The majority of tutors in our survey expressed the view that end-of-course assessment represents the final phase of a cumulative assessment procedure, implying that they do not use any additional, separate procedures at this stage. One way of looking at this finding is in terms of the continuity of factors seen as important by tutors at each stage of assessment (pre, during, and end of course).

The importance attached to social skills, in terms of the student's ability to participate in, and profit from, education in a group has emerged as a major factor at all stages of assessment, and possibly reflects a crucial aim of the courses in our survey—i.e to raise the student's level of social adaptability in a range of contexts.

Manual dexterity, though particularly relevant on Work Introduction and Combined courses, was considered relatively unimportant at the pre-course stage. This is an example of the lack of continuity which often exists between all stages of teaching in F.E.

6.4 Assessment in the Teaching Process

As mentioned previously, assessment has an important contribution to make to curriculum evaluation and innovation, relating to, for example, the extent to which a course achieves its teaching objectives and its wider aims of preparing students for the future. Only about half of all tutors in our survey saw one of the major functions of assessment as the evaluation of the course curriculum as a basis for planning.

A consistent complaint from tutors was the amount of time needed to carry out assessment. However, if assessment is seen as an essential component of the process of achieving curricular aims, time spent on it becomes more meaningful and justifiable. Furthermore, if new approaches to assessment are developed (e.g. incorporating student self-assessment, etc.) the amount of tutors' time spent in direct assessment would be reduced. However, this would require the kind of planning that was demonstrated in the Scottish Diagnostic Assessment Project (see Literature Review). About two out of three tutors in our survey expressed at least some dissatisfaction with their knowledge of appropriate methods of assessment for the students currently in their care. Tutors on General Education courses expressed less dissatisfaction than others, and this might be accounted for by their greater length of experience in teaching students with special needs, as well as the fact that such courses tend to be well-established and to have a well-defined curriculum.

Again, two out of three tutors felt that they had not received suitable training in assessment procedures for the students currently in their care, and further training was one of the most commonly cited means of improving knowledge and skills. Even more frequently mentioned was the desire to have the opportunity to meet with staff in other colleges to exchange ideas. These considerations were common to tutors on all types of courses. About half of all tutors felt that with guidance from the FEU they could improve their knowledge of assessment procedures. These findings would seem to suggest that various initiatives to do with increasing contact between F.E. staff and providing training in assessment procedures could be valuable.

Initial and inservice training, as well as the use of outside support services (such as psychological services), are means of promoting the knowledge, use and development of effective assessment procedures and the crucial role of assessment in the teaching process. However, some staff development needs could be fulfilled by the implementation of small-scale case-studies to develop, in conjunction with F.E. tutors, relevant criterion-referenced assessment methods in particular regions and colleges. A model of this approach has been described by the Scottish Diagnostic Assessment Project (see Literature Review). Although this was aimed at secondary school pupils, the principles used, and the aims of the project, are applicable to courses for students in our target group.

6.5 Guidelines

Many points have been raised by our Literature Review and survey and have been discussed in preceding sections of this report. Owing to the nature and limitations of this study detailed guidelines would be out of place. The following general guidelines are suggested for future developments in approaches to the assessment of students with special needs in F.E.

(i) The assessment of students should be inextricably linked with curricular aims and objectives in F.E.

(ii) This suggests a need for a clearly formulated and developed criterion-referenced approach to assessment.

(iii) The extension of provision for students with special needs at F.E. level implies that there should be continuity between school and college in the curriculum and therefore in assessment.

(iv) Assessment should also make an important contribution to curriculum planning and evaluation.

(v) With increasing emphasis on a broader curriculum for students with special needs in F.E., the content and therefore the form of assessment will need to expand, for example in the area of social skills.

(vi) There is a need for further staff training in the understanding of the functions of assessment, and in the application of a criterion-referenced approach. It is suggested that this could be achieved through the setting up of feasibility projects along the lines discussed in our report.

Appendix 1: Colleges Contacted

List of colleges of Further Education which were approached to participate in this study

Abraham Moss Open College
Bedford College of Higher Education
Boston College of Further Education
Bournville College of Further Education
Braintree College of Further Education
Bridgend College of Technology
Bridgewater College
Brooklyn Technical College
Brixton College
Burton-Upon-Trent Technical College
Chester College of Further Education
Chesterfield College of Technology
Coalville Technical College
Derby College of Further Education
Erith College
Fielden Park College of Further Education
Frome College of Further Education
Garrets Green Technical College
Gloucester College of Arts & Technology
Halton College of Further Education
Hammersmith & West London College
High Peak College of Further Education
Huddersfield Technical College
Lancaster & Morecambe College of Further Education
Macclesfield College of Further Education
Mid-Cheshire College of Further Education
Mid-Warwickshire College of Further Education
Melton Mowbray College of Further Education
Nene College
North Cheshire College
North East Derbyshire College of Further Education
North Nottinghamshire College of Further Education
North Warwickshire College of Technology & Art
Paddington College
Percival Whitley College of Further Education
Reading College of Technology
Richmond-upon-Thames College
Shirecliffe College
Solihull College of Technology
Somerset College of Arts & Technology
South Cheshire College of Further Education
Southwark College
South East Derbyshire College
South East London College
South Thames College
Tamworth College of Further Education
Tile Hill College of Further Education
Walker Technical College
Walsall College of Technology
Wellingborough Technical College
West Bridgford College of Further Education
West Nottinghamshire College of Further Education
Yeovil College

Appendix 2: Project Questionnaire

FEU Project: **Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education**
Tutors' Questionnaire

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

SECTION I

Name of College .....

Name of Tutor Completing Form .....

Department .....

Position .....

(1) Please give details of any college course(s) to which "ESN(M)" students in the broad 16–19 age-group are admitted.

	Title	*Type of Course* (e.g. Link, Post-School, Infill etc)	*Full or Part-time*	*Provided By* (e.g. LEA, MSC)	*In which Dept.*	*No. of years course has been established*
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

(2) Please state on which course(s) named above *you* teach.

Important Note

A *separate questionnaire* is needed for each *course* which admits any student(s) in the specified group. The questionnaire should, in each case, be completed by the tutor in charge of that course. It may therefore be necessary for one course tutor to complete more than one questionnaire. We regret any inconvenience this may cause. If more copies of the questionnaire are required these can be easily obtained by telephoning Mrs. Jennifer Roberts on 01-636-1500 (extension 490).

SECTION II STUDENT POPULATION

Before commencing this section, please note that if you are the tutor in charge of *more than one* course which admits "ESN(M)" students, a separate questionnaire should be completed for each course. The following questions apply to *one course only*.

1. Please specify to which course this particular questionnaire applies:

Title	*Type of Course* (e.g. Link, Post-School, Infill etc)	*Full or Part-time*	*Provided By* (e.g. LEA, MSC)	*In which Dept.*	*No. of years course has been established*
.....					

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2. Length of course in years: (if this varies considerably from student to student, please say so and give average length) ☐

3. Number of hours per week (if less than full time): ☐

4. Number of hours of class contact per week *you* have with the students: ☐

5. How many tutors teach the students on this course, including yourself? ☐

6. Age-range of students accepted onto course (if any):
   Minimum: ..... Maximum: ..... ☐☐

7. Is there any age-limit beyond which students are not allowed to remain on or complete the course? ☐

8. Number of students on the course this year:
   Total: ..... Boys:..... Girls: ..... ☐☐☐

9. Number of students on the course who fall into the "ESN(M)" group (if less than the total) ☐

10. Please give approximate numbers of students who previously attended:
    a. Special school ..... b. Ordinary school .....
    c. Special Unit within ordinary school ..... ☐☐☐

11. Are there any students who have *not* come directly from school? If so, how many and from where have they come? ☐

12. Who initially recommended the students to come onto this course? (please give approximate numbers of recommendations from each source, if known)
    a. Class teachers ..... b. Head teacher .....
    c. Specialist careers officer.....
    d. Other (please specify) ..... ☐☐☐☐

13. Is your intake this year fairly typical of other recent years?
    a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ ☐

14. If you answered No to Question 12, how does it differ?

15. Where appropriate, please attach specimens of: a. Course Prospectus
    b. Course timetable/structure/programmes. Thank you.

SECTION III ASSESSMENT

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

A. Before Entry to Course

In part A of this section we are interested in the assessment procedures used to select students for your course, including information obtained from schools, careers offices and families, as well as college-based selection procedures. The questions below are designed to provide us with information about the procedures *usually* followed when dealing with prospective students for your particular course.

1. About how long before the commencement of the college course does *initial* assessment of the student's suitability for the course *usually* take place?

   a. Less than 1 month before entry to course ☐ ☐
   b. Less than three months before entry to course ☐
   c. 3–6 months before entry to course ☐
   d. 6–12 months before entry to course ☐
   e. 1–2 years before entry to course ☐
   f. 2 years or more before entry to course ☐
   g. Other (please specify) ☐

2. At this initial stage, upon whose judgement would you choose to rely most heavily in assessing the student's suitability for the course? (Please opt for *one* or *two* answers)

   a. The class teacher ☐ ☐☐
   b. The head teacher ☐
   c. The specialist careers officer ☐
   d. You, as the prospective college tutor ☐
   e. The college Principal ☐
   f. The college Head of Department ☐
   g. The parents ☐
   h. Other (please specify) ☐

3. Is there a "named person" in your college co-ordinating matters pertaining to special needs students and if so what is his/her role in pre-course assessment? (Please also give status of named person)

4. Please indicate which of the following sources of information are available to you and which you actually make use of in the pre-course assessment of students:

	(tick for yes) *Available*	(tick for yes) *Make Use of*	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
a. School records (levels of basic educational skills)	☐	☐	☐☐
b. School records (other factors e.g. personal qualities)	☐	☐	☐☐
c. Medical records (vision or hearing)	☐	☐	☐☐
d. Medical records (motor functioning)	☐	☐	☐☐
e. Medical records (medical condition/general health)	☐	☐	☐☐
f. Discussions with school head	☐	☐	☐☐
g. Discussion with class teacher	☐	☐	☐☐
h. Information from specialist careers officer	☐	☐	☐☐
i. Assessment by future college tutor (class contact)	☐	☐	☐☐
j. Assessment by future college tutor (interview)	☐	☐	☐☐
k. College-based test(s) or other formal selection procedure	☐	☐	☐☐
l. Case-conference involving school, college etc.	☐	☐	☐☐
m. Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐☐

5. Do you feel you would like easier access to any of the above-mentioned records, and if so, which? ☐☐

6. We would be grateful if you would describe here any college-based entrance tests or other selection procedures, and enclose copies where possible with your reply. Thank you. ☐

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7. Which of the above sources would you consider to be *particularly* useful in the assessment of a prospective student? (You may name one or more) ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐

8. Does the college involve itself in the assessment of a prospective student on your course: ☐

   a. On one or two specific occasions ☐
   b. On several occasions over a period of time ☐
   c. Continuously over a period of time ☐
   d. No involvement ☐
   e. Other (please specify) ☐

9. Which of the following factors would you consider to be particularly important when assessing a prospective student for your course? (Tick as many as you wish)

   a. Standard of literacy ☐ ☐
   b. Standard of numeracy ☐ ☐
   c. Manual dexterity/motor skill ☐ ☐
   d. Social competence with adults ☐ ☐
   e. Social competence with peers ☐ ☐
   f. "Teachability" (capacity to respond to teacher, follow instructions etc.) ☐ ☐
   g. "Employability" or employment potential ☐ ☐
   h. Attitudes and needs of student's family ☐
   i. Range of other options available to student if he/she does not attend your course ☐
   i. Level of motivation/self-sufficiency/independence shown by student ☐
   k. Degree of need of student for more education/training before proceeding to other courses/employment ☐

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l. Other (please specify) ☐

10. Please list any reasons, both important and minor, why you would consider a student *not* suited to take up your course. ☐

11. By whom is the decision ultimately made about whether a student comes onto your course?

a. Yourself ☐ ☐

b. College Principal ☐ ☐

c. Head of Department ☐ ☐

d. Other (please specify) ☐ ☐

12. Which of the following statements most nearly reflects your own position in the college? (Tick one)

a. We have a well-established course and a good idea of which students can benefit from it. Therefore we are able to select those students for whom we feel the course will be appropriate ☐ ☐

b. Our course has an established structure, but we will occasionally or frequently modify this to meet the needs of students of a wider range of ability ☐

c. We find ourselves taking in students who would not previously have come into our classes and are therefore building up a curriculum to meet their needs as required ☐

13. What do you feel are the main shortcomings, if any, of the methods of assessment you use for students before entry to their course? ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐

B. During the Course

N.B. Please do *not* include mention of *end-of-course* assessment procedures in this section. These will be dealt with in the following section.

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14. During the course, do you employ any of the following assessment procedures? (Tick as many as you wish)

a. Informal, personal assessment by course tutor	☐	☐
b. Use of checklists, student "profiles" or similar	☐	☐
c. Structured interviews with student	☐	☐
d. Tests and/or examinations (internal)	☐	☐
e. Tests and/or examinations (external)	☐	☐
f. Reports from work placement supervisor (where applicable)	☐	☐
g. Reports from parents	☐	☐
h. Multi-disciplinary case-conference for individual students	☐	☐
i. College reports from all lecturers who teach on course	☐	☐
j. Other (please specify)	☐	☐

15. Broadly speaking, which of the following factors do you aim to assess *during* the course, and how frequently? Please complete the following table, ticking as many as you wish.

	Assessed during course (√ = yes)	*Frequency* Once or twice	At regular intervals	On a continuous basis	
a. Standard of literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
b. Standard of numeracy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
c Manual dexterity/motor skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
d. Personality/social skills within college environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
e. Personality/social skills outside college environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐

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f. Personality/social skills at the work-place (where applicable)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
g. Ability to perform job (where applicable)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
h. Employment potential, or "employability" of student	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
i. Suitability of course curriculum for student	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
j. Ability of student to proceed further with course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
k. Self-sufficiency of student (e.g. motivation to study, independent living, etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
l. Creative/recreational skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐
m. Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐☐☐☐

16. Who originally implemented the assessment procedures currently in use during the course? (Tick as many as you wish)

a. Yourself	☐	☐
b. Your predecessor	☐	☐
c. Other college staff	☐	☐
d. Head of Department	☐	☐
e. College Principal	☐	☐
f. Other (please specify)	☐	☐

17. Have these methods been developed as a result of: (tick as many as you wish)

a. Personal experience as to the best methods	☐	☐
b. Consultation with other staff at your college	☐	☐

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c. Consultation with "outside" professionals (please specify)	☐	☐
d. Consultation of available test materials, books etc.	☐	☐
e. Consultation with the Local Education Authority	☐	☐
f. Demand from students and/or their parents	☐	☐
g. Demand from employers	☐	☐
h. Consultation with Examining Body, Training Board, etc.	☐	☐
i. Other (please specify)	☐	☐

18. What would you consider to be the main purpose(s) or aims of assessing your students during their course? (Tick one or more)

a. To assess the student's ability to cope with the course, and his/her rate of progress	☐	☐
b. To modify teaching to meet individual needs in the light of (a)	☐	☐
c. To predict the student's future academic and/or employment potential	☐	☐
d. To evaluate the effectiveness of the course curriculum as a basis for course planning	☐	☐
e. To make available information which may be required by other tutors, employers or others concerned with students	☐	☐
f. As a method of having the course validated	☐	☐
g. Other (please specify)	☐	☐

19. Please describe, in your own words and in a little more detail, the assessment procedures you currently employ for students during their course, as mentioned in questions 12–15. Please mention any tests used *by name.*
We should be most grateful to receive copies of any record sheets, test material, etc. with your reply. Thank you. ☐

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20. What do you feel are the main shortcomings, if any, of the method(s) of assessment you use during the course, and how could these be overcome? (e.g. lack of continuity from school to college; assessment can be very time-consuming; staff lack training in assessment techniques; tests available are inappropriate; too much emphasis on testing, etc.)

21. Is there anything else you feel could or should be assessed during the course which has not emerged from the questions above? (Please feel free to make more general comments here if you wish, besides those applying to the specific course on which you are commenting).

C. End of Course Assessment

22. Do you use any of the following assessment procedures for students at the *end* of their course? (Tick as many as you wish)

a. Informal, personal assessment by course tutor
b. Use of checklists, student "profiles", assessment schedules etc.
c. Structured interview with student
d. Test(s) and/or examination(s) (internal)
e. Test(s) and/or examination(s) (external)
f. Report from work placement supervisor (where applicable)
g. Report from parents
h. Interview with specialist careers officer
i. Other (please specify)

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23. Broadly speaking, which of the following factors do you aim to assess at the end of the course? (Tick as many as you wish)

a. Standard of literacy ☐ ☐

b. Standard of numeracy ☐ ☐

c. Manual dexterity/motor skills ☐ ☐

d. Personality/social skills within college environment ☐ ☐

e. Personality/social skills outside college environment ☐ ☐

f. Personality/social skills at workplace (where applicable) ☐ ☐

g. Ability to perform job (where applicable) ☐ ☐

h. Employment potential, or "employability" of student ☐ ☐

i. Ability of student to profit from course curriculum ☐ ☐

j. Self-sufficiency of student (e.g. motivation, independent living) ☐ ☐

k. Creative/recreational skills ☐ ☐

l. Suitability of student for future courses, placement, training scheme, etc. ☐ ☐

m. Other (please specify) ☐ ☐

24. Please describe in full detail any assessment procedures you ticked in Question 20, including the official title/number of any test or examination. *We should be most grateful to receive copies of any test material, record sheets, past papers, etc. with your reply.* Thank you. ☐

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25. How does the end-of-course assessment procedure (if any) relate to previous assessment of students during the course? (Tick the one which most nearly applies, or give your own answer)

a. The assessment procedure is cumulative and the end-of-course assessment represents the final phase of this process ☐

b. We take into account assessment carried out during the course, but also employ a final assessment procedure which is wholly or partly separate from the cumulative assessment ☐ ☐

c. The final assessment is separate from, and unrelated to any previous assessment during the course ☐

d. Other (please describe) ☐

26. What would you consider to be the main purpose(s) or aim(s) of the end-of-course assessment procedure (if any) used for your students?

a. Provides a summary or full report on the student's progress through the course ☐ ☐

b. Enables predictions to be made about the student's academic and/or employment potential ☐ ☐

c. Aids decision-making about the student's immediate or long-term future plans ☐ ☐

d. Aids decision-making on the admissions policy for future students on the course ☐ ☐

e. Provides a means for evaluating the appropriateness of the course curriculum ☐ ☐

f. Provides a measure of validation for the course ☐ ☐

g. Satisfies college policy or regulations ☐ ☐

h. Satisfies demands of students, parents or employers (please state which) ☐ ☐

i. Other (please specify) ☐ ☐

27. Who originally implemented the end-of-course assessment procedure used for your students? (Tick as many as you wish)

a. Yourself ☐ ☐

b. Your predecessor ☐ ☐

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c. Other college staff ☐ ☐

d. Head of Department ☐ ☐

e. College Principal ☐ ☐

f. Other (please specify) ☐ ☐

28. Was this procedure decided upon as a result of: (Tick as many as you wish)

a. Personal experience as to the best methods ☐ ☐

b. Consultation with other staff at the college ☐ ☐

c. Consultation with the specialist careers officer ☐ ☐

d. Consultation with other "outside" professionals (please specify) ☐ ☐

e. Consultation of available test materials, books etc. ☐ ☐

f. Consultation with Local Education Authority ☐ ☐

g. Consultation with Examining Body, Training Board, etc. ☐ ☐

h. Demand from students and/or their parents ☐ ☐

i. Demand from employers ☐ ☐

j. Other (please specify) ☐ ☐

29. Do you generally know where the student will be going after the course?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ ☐

Does this in any way affect your assessment procedures, and if so, how? ☐

30. What do you consider to be the main shortcomings (if any) of the end-of-course assessment procedure used for your students, and how could these be overcome?

☐☐☐

☐☐☐

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General Comments
We should be grateful for some information on your own interests and your opinions on assessment.

31. In the course of your teaching careers, have you obtained: (tick for yes)

    a. A general teaching qualification ☐ ☐☐

    b. A "special needs" teaching qualification ☐

32. About how many years teaching experience have you obtained:

    a. In Further Education (total) ..... years ☐☐

    b. With students with special needs in Further Education ☐☐

    b. With students with special needs in Further Education ..... years

    c. In other forms of teaching (please specify) ..... years

    d. Non-teaching experience (please specify) ..... years

33. Have you ever received any relevant training in assessment procedures suitable for the students *currently* in your care? ☐

    a. No ☐

    b. Yes ☐ (please state type, e.g. inservice, content & length of training and whether it was satisfactory)

34. Do you feel satisfied with your current knowledge of appropriate methods of assessment for your students?

    a. Yes, completely satisfied ☐

    b. Fairly satisfied ☐ ☐

    c. Not completely satisfied ☐

    d. Not satisfied ☐

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35. If you are less than completely satisfied, how do you feel that your knowledge of appropriate assessment procedures could be improved?

a. More guidance from bodies such as the Further Education Curriculum Review & Development Unit ☐ ☐

b. More guidance from other professionals (please specify: e.g. educational psychologists) ☐ ☐

c. More consultation with other staff in your college ☐ ☐

d. Opportunities to meet/visit staff in other colleges to find out what is being done ☐ ☐

e. By receiving training or further training in assessment procedures (please state type of training you would prefer, e.g. inservice, and any particular aspects of assessment that should be included) ☐ ☐

f. More support from the college and/or Local Administration ☐ ☐

g. Better collaboration with schools ☐ ☐

h. Better collaboration with medical personnel ☐ ☐

i. Better collaboration with social work personnel ☐ ☐

j. Better collaboration with the specialist careers officer ☐ ☐

k. Other suggestions ☐ ☐

36. In the light of the current social and economic climate, do you see the aims and objectives of your course changing, and if so, in what ways (if any) do you feel this will affect the assessment procedures currently in use? ☐☐ ☐☐

37. If you have any general comments to make on any aspect of assessment, whether covered or not by this questionaire, please do so here. Thank you so much for your co-operation in agreeing to participate in our survey.

Appendix 3: Project Letters

(i) Letter to College Principals

University of London Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
Director: William Taylor, BScEcon, PhD, DSc, Litt.D, FCCEA, FCP
Deputy Director: Professor Denis Lawton, BA, PhD

Department of Child Development and Educational Psychology
FEU Project: Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education
Director: Professor K Wedell, MA, PhD
Research Associate: Mrs J Roberts, MSc, PGCE
55 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0NT Telephone 01-636 1500

November, 1981.

Dear Principal,

FEU Project: Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education

We have been asked by the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit to undertake a study describing current practice in the Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education. A Project Information Bulletin is attached giving further details.

The focus of our study is on students with moderate learning difficulties, who might be described as "ESN(M)". In the case of the FE College these will be students with no formal qualifications, who may have attended a special school, and for whom the college has felt it necessary to make special (though not necessarily segregated) arrangements. We are interested primarily in the 16-19 age range but realise that groups may contain students outside these ranges.

Your College has been selected to participate in a small postal survey of about 50 Colleges thought to be admitting students in the group defined above. Owing to our very limited funds, we are anxious to receive the results of this survey as quickly as possible. If, therefore, you would be willing to co-operate we should be grateful if you would pass on the enclosed questionnaires to each Course Tutor who is actually teaching any students in the above group. (N.B. we do not require information on any other groups of students.)

We have enclosed 5 questionnaires for your convenience, since a separate questionnaire is needed for each course to which "ESN(M)" students aged 16-19 are admitted. Each form should be completed and returned direct to us by the relevant Course Tutor. If more questionnaires are required we shall be happy to provide them.

If your College would be willing to participate, we should appreciate return of the enclosed pre-paid card in the first instance.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

K. Wedell
Project Director

J. Roberts
Research Associate

(ii) Letter to Course Tutors

University of London Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
Director: William Taylor, BScEcon, PhD, DSc, Litt.D, FCCEA, FCP
Deputy Director: Professor Denis Lawton, BA, PhD

Department of Child Development and Educational Psychology
FEU Project: Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education
Director: Professor K Wedell, MA, PhD
Research Associate: Mrs J Roberts, MSc, PGCE
55 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0NT Telephone 01-636 1500

November, 1981.

Dear Colleague,

FEU Project: Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education

We have been asked by the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit to undertake a study describing current practice in the Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education. A Project Information Bulletin is attached giving further details.

The focus of our study is on students with moderate learning difficulties, who might be described as "ESN(M)". In the case of the FE College these will be students with no formal qualifications, who may have attended a special school, and for whom the college has felt it necessary to make special (though not necessarily segregated) arrangements. We are interested primarily in the 16-19 age range but realise that groups may contain students outside these ranges.

This is an enquiry to discover whether you feel assessment has a role to play in the provision of the course(s) on which you teach. We have interpreted "assessment" in a broad sense, ranging from diagnosis, counselling and placement through to testing, examining for attainment and competency. Thus we are aiming to obtain information on assessment procedures used at entry to, during the course of, and on completion of Further Education courses. We are also interested in your opinions and suggestions concerning the role of assessment for this group of students.

All information provided will be treated in confidence and no individual or College will be mentioned by name in the results without prior permission.

To save you time and trouble, we would emphasize that we do not require questionnaires to be returned on behalf of any groups of students other than those specified above (i.e. "ESN(M)" in the 16-19 age range.)

Finally, although this questionnaire may appear lengthy, it can be answered mainly by ticking boxes, and should take well under half-an-hour to complete. Owing to our limited funds, we are anxious to receive information as quickly as possible to enable it to be included in our study - so if you can find time within the next week or two to return this questionnaire, we would be more than grateful. Please return the questionnaire directly to us at the above address.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us at the above address/telephone number.

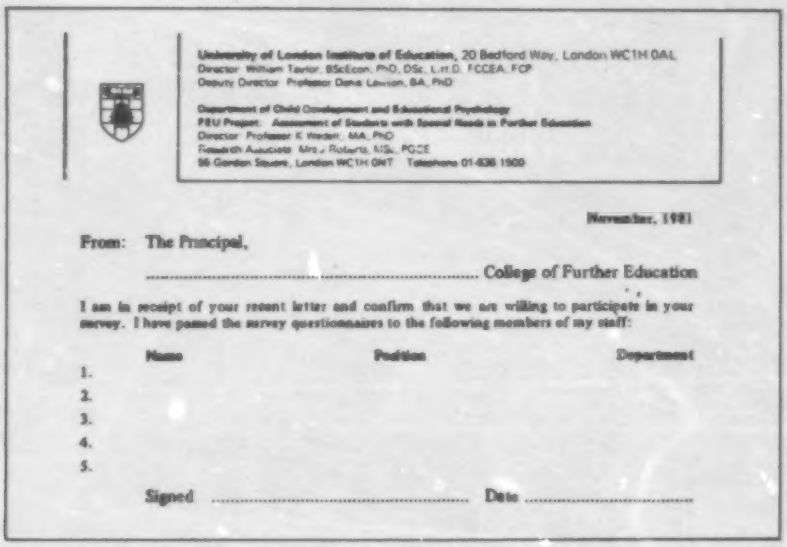
Thank you in advance for your kind co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

K. Wedell
Project Director

J. Roberts
Research Associate

(iii) Reply-paid Postcard



University of London Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
Director: William Taylor, BSc(Econ), PhD, DSc, L.H.D, FCCEA, FCP
Deputy Director: Professor Dana Lawson, BA, PhD

Department of Child Development and Educational Psychology
PEU Project: Assessment of Students with Special Needs in Further Education
Director: Professor K Wedell, MA, PhD
Research Associate: Mrs J Roberts, MSc, PGCE
55 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0NT Telephone 01-636 1500

November, 1981

From: The Principal,

..... College of Further Education

I am in receipt of your recent letter and confirm that we are willing to participate in your survey. I have passed the survey questionnaires to the following members of my staff:

	Name	Position	Department
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Signed ..... Date .....

Appendix 4: Interview Schedule

Case Study Interview Schedule

1. How did this college originally come to be involved with this group of students?
2. What was your own role in this, if any?
3. What's the current relationship of this section of the college's work to the college as a whole? (Size of Dept., or section; status; etc)

   . . . Is there integration at any level?
4. What's the relationship between the college and the schools from which the students come?

   Direct links

   Indirect links (eg Careers Officer)

   Shortcomings
5. What are the main problems in relating to schools?

   What more would you like to *know* from schools?
6. At this stage would you have any criteria for rejecting a potential student?

   If so, what?

   Could you identify such a student based on the information available to you? If not, why not?
7. Are there any other aspects of the students' "previous lives" which you feel affect their transition to college?

   e.g. lack of social life—medical problems—parental overprotectiveness—etc

   Would any of these things affect a student's ability to be accepted for the course?
8. What is the involvement of other services (e.g. Social Services, etc) in the student's transition to college, and should such services play a greater or lesser role?
9. Is there anything more you would like to know about your students that you are as yet unable to find out before they enter college?
10. On the other hand, do you feel there are areas of "overassessment"?
11. Once you have the students, what is your "educational philosophy" in terms of assessment?

    covering syllabus/curriculum

    course validity

    demands of employers, funding bodies, etc (specify—e.g. MSC course requires assessment of work skills)
12. What are the dimensions along which you feel your students and others like them could be most usefully described?

    . . . sensory motor emotional educational
13. Does your course curriculum reflect these dimensions? To what extent
14. Detailed description of what is being done (during course and end of course) and rationale behind it. May we have permission to reproduce documents?
15. Do you consider these methods successful (unsuccessful)? Why?
16. What factors have influenced you in adopting these methods? Probes . . . "objective" measures required by others, employers etc . . . need to evaluate course . . . lack of suitable alternatives
17. To what extent has it been necessary for you to devise your own methods? Do you feel this helps or hinders "objective" assessment?
18. What uses do you make of the results of your assessment?

    . . . adjusting to individual needs

    . . . adjusting to group needs

    . . . evaluating course
19. What is your relationship with employers or Careers Service at "the other end" of the students' course? Good/bad? How could it be improved?

    How does this affect assessment, if at all?
20. What is your relationship to other services (e.g. Social Services, etc) at the end of the course and does this affect assessment at all?

21. Staff training—what are the needs of staff for:

    More time for assessment

    More training in techniques

    Better access to techniques devised by others

    What effect does lack of these have on assessment?

22. What are your views on assessment generally for this group of students?

    How desirable is it for the students? the staff? parents? employers?

    What are its uses/abuses in its current form? What effect does it have on our view of the student, his needs, the curriculum?

    What advice would you give to someone, regarding assessment, who was setting up a course for ESN(M) students?

    What about the future of assessment for such students, in the light of new Government focus on this age-group/lack of available jobs/possible change in focus of F.E. to "education for leisure"?

    Should assessment be geared to the context of employment or personal development?

Appendix 5 Case Study 1

This Appendix relates to Case Study 1 and contains:

(i) College Information Booklet

(ii) Work Orientation Unit Application Form

(iii) Work Orientation Unit Record Form (Staff Information)

(iv) Work Orientation Unit Basic Student Record Form

(v) Work Orientation Unit Student Educational Record Form

(vi) Work Orientation Unit Student Social Development Record Form

(vii) Social Education Checklist

(viii) English Checklist

(ix) Social Education Assessment Record

(x) Operative Workshop Assessment Record

(xi) Work Orientation Unit Student Progress Record

(xii) Work Orientation Unit Month-by-Month Assessment Record

(i) College Information Booklet

As reported in Special Education, Vol 61 No. 3 September 1972, provision for the handicapped school-leaver at the Case Study 1 College of Further Education began in 1969. Since the small pilot scheme met with success, it was agreed to develop this area of work through a needs analysis of the catchment area and resources already available in the college, together with a phased recruitment of specialist teaching staff in light of the evolving nature of the provision.

Currently the Work Orientation Unit (WOU) provides further educational facilities for handicapped school-leavers within a college of further education for a catchment area which covers all of one LEA, parts of three others and occasionally elsewhere in the United Kingdom. The range of handicapping conditions is extensive and covers the following areas:

physical handicaps

intellectual handicaps

emotional handicaps

sensory handicaps (i.e. blind/partially-sighted, deaf/partially-hearing)

The degree of disablement possessed by the students varies from minimal to severe. Approximately 160 places are available.

Referral

Candidates for entry to the unit are referred by the careers guidance service with which links are maintained for as long as a student remains in the college.

Figure 1. **Sources of Referral**

Careers Officer directed entry from school.
Careers Officer or DRO entry from work failure.
Entry also via Social Services, voluntary bodies, parental initiative.

Assessment

A. Before College via Application Forms	General Information—Section A Educational Information—Section B Social Information—Section C Medical Information—Section D1–D5 Vocational Information—Section E
B. Interview	
C. In College	1. Necessary skills—task orientated 2. Sufficient skills—person orientated

It has proved necessary to construct a rather complex application form with sections to be completed by the school, social worker, doctor, and careers officer. This is because we have found that a report completed by one agency may stress a particular point giving an unreasonable bias to the total picture. The careers officer acts as the "named" person and co-ordinates all applications to the Unit handled by him.

Courses

For many students the basis of the assessment procedure is the application form and the interview, and following this the student can be placed on a course appropriate to his abilities and interests. This involves placing students on normal further education courses or modified versions of these courses which, at the College, cover the broad spectrum subject areas of engineering, construction, business studies and management, general studies, catering, dress, needlework, fashions and home management/family care. The pattern of provision at these two levels is as follows:

Figure 2.

Level One
(normal F.E. courses 1–2 years)

Vocational/Educational	*Social*
Full secondment to an appropriate department Specialist support from WOU if required.	Support from WOU e.g. Medical, Social, Financial, Transport, Aids: Counselling.

Placement
(WOU)

Higher Education or Work
(10%–15% of all students involved at this level)

Figure 3.

Level Two
(modified F.E. courses 1–2 years)

Vocational	*Educational*	*Social*
Partial secondment to appropriate department at craft or sub-craft level, specialist help from WOU if required.	General Education support from WOU	Social development programme by WOU Recreational activities support as in Level One.

Work Experience and Placement
(WOU)
Employment
(20%–25% of all students)

Many students, initially, cannot aspire to courses at levels One and Two, and it is for these students that special courses at Level Three have been designed. It should be pointed out at the outset that it is possible to move on to Level Two after a period of time at Level Three.

Level Three Courses

Assessment

All students entering the Unit at Level Three are regarded as potential employees. For this reason, therefore, every student is assessed at two levels:

(a) The necessary skills for work are measured in the form of specific work skills either through standardised tests or, more commonly, by being allocated to practical working tasks.
(b) The sufficient skills for work in which an attempt is made to assess the individual student's work personality indicating his strengths and weaknesses as a worker. This assessment is in the form of on-going evaluation in industrial workshop, vocational training and work experience situations. It is possible to build up a personal profile of each student and to note on-going change.

Throughout the assessment procedure we are concerned to establish a base-line upon which to build and to recognise potential where it exists. The emphasis in the evaluation process is on formative evaluation. Continual feedback gained through the evaluative process is used as a source of information to both staff and students. This form of evaluation makes the highlighting of strengths and weaknesses possible at the outset and the consequence of this is remediation in the weak areas. Using this method it is hoped to prepare a profile on each student which, on completion, will give a reasonably accurate summative evaluation for presentation to an employer. It also ensures that the objectives set for each student in the planning of his work programme are those that are evaluated.

Work Areas

Figure 4 on page 74 indicates the pattern of provision at Level Three and it is important to examine each of the three areas and the inter-relationship which exists.

(a) Vocational—this programme is one which takes up at least 50% of each student's time throughout his course. The basic building block for every student in the vocational area is an initial period of time spent in the industrial training workshop housed, since 1978, in purpose-built accommodation. The purposes of the

workshop are four in number:

Operative Workshop

(i) To aid in the initial and on-going assessment of the student, both initially and on-going, especially in the fields of manual dexterity skills, and the elements of work behavour.

(ii) To facilitate, where necessary, the pre-training of students at an initial level prior to vocational training proper.

(iii) To provide, for the more severely handicapped students, training at an operative level as an assessment and programme-devising technique. It is this function that takes up most of the workshop's facilities.

(iv) To offer an integration feature for handicapped students to work alongside their able-bodied peers and vice-versa, and to provide, for the able-bodied, realistic practical experience in an operative workshop environment.

Figure 4.

Level Three

(Specially designed courses) 2 + years

Vocational Area	*Social Development*	*Educational*
Operative Training Workshop.	Functional social education programme.	Functional literacy and numeracy in support of vocational area
Sample vocational courses.	Recreational/ Leisure Courses	
Limited Skills Course.		
Work Experience.		

Placement in Work or Sheltered Workshop/ATC etc.

As stated above, function three occupies the majority of the workshop's facilities and the succeeding description applies primarily to it. Based upon a diagnostic period in the workshop, it is possible to set training objectives for each student according to the model in figure 5.

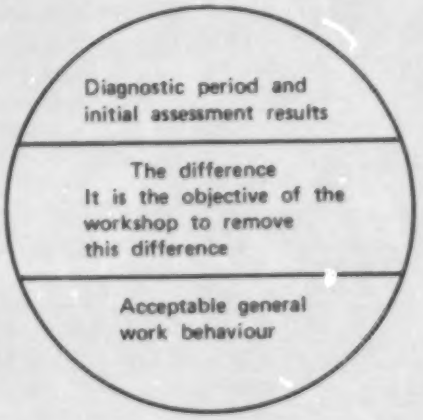

Diagnostic period and initial assessment results
The difference
It is the objective of the workshop to remove this difference
Acceptable general work behaviour
Before training
Training objectives
After training

Figure 5. Model for Defining Specific Training Objectives

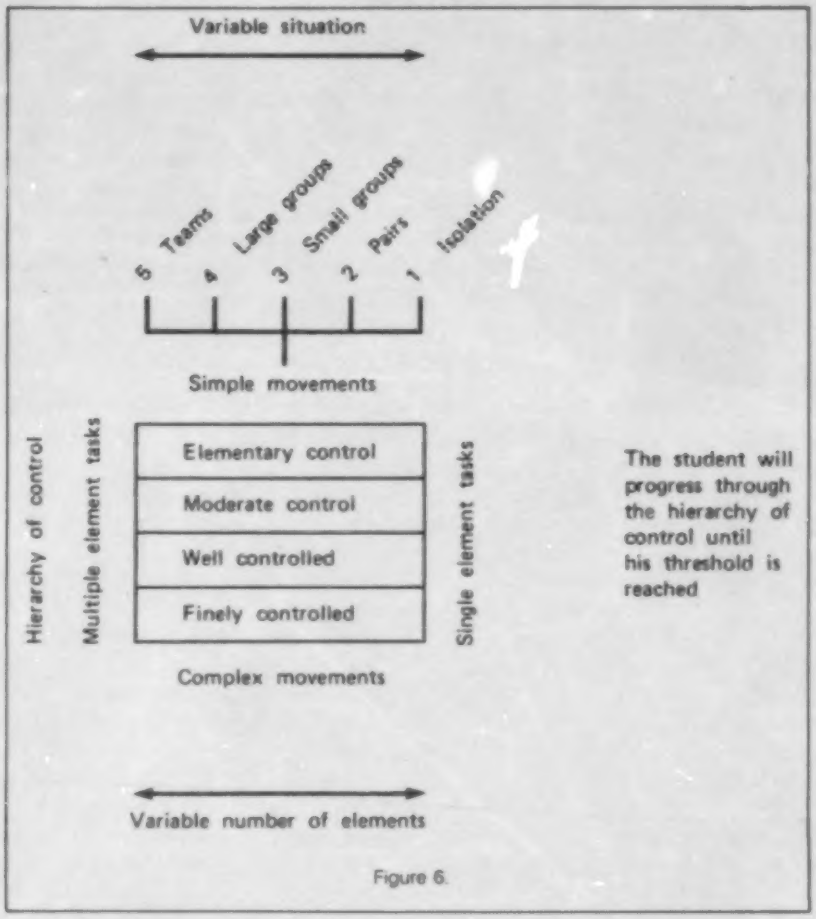


Figure 6.

At the end of the diagnostic and initial assessment period, information will have been obtained about the student's base-line situation. This information can be compared with that which we accept as general work behaviour. It is the difference between this base-line and the acceptable level which becomes the focus of attention and it will be necessary, at this stage, to write a programme of training objectives to suit the individual in order that the difference may be removed. Once the individual programme has been established the student can be placed in the various situations that will be of benefit to him. These work situations have been created by importing sub-contract work from industry and by developing direct College training/production lines. Currently these cover the general areas of engineering machining, sewing machining, industrial screen-printing, plastic injection moulding, printing, light assembly, packaging manufacture and electronic wiring.

The aim is to help students adjust to industrial life not to train them for particular trades or crafts, but what may be termed as a side benefit is that it is possible to give fairly accurate assessments of students' aptitudes or potential for work in a particular area, and, indeed, this may well be followed up by specific training in the College.

Many of the elements that make up a "general work behaviour" may be observed by changing the situation that a student is placed in.

Three variables can be considered:

1. the student may be required to work on his own or with others,
2. the task may consist of a single element or it may consist of many elements,
3. the control required to perform the task may range from simple increments to finely controlled movements.

These three variables have an infinite number of combinations from which specific situations can be created for particular students. By varying the situations an observing member of staff will be able to establish the students' thresholds.

Figure 6 on page 75 illustrates how the situation may be varied.

The period of time spent in the Operative Training Workshop can follow two different patterns. Either a period of full-time placement can be followed by other courses or, more commonly, a period of time not exceeding three days per week, with the other days being taken up with other activities. These other activities include sample vocational courses as well as social education and general education which will be returned to later.

Sample Vocational Courses

The purpose of sample vocational courses is to widen the student's horizons as to what is available to him in the broad areas referred to earlier of engineering, construction, catering, dress, needlework, fashion and home management, with the addition of domestic trades and horticulture/playing-field maintenance. Once a student has established his level of interest, specific training, in the form of a limited skills training course, can be given.

Limited Skills Training Courses

An example of limited skills training courses is afforded by the General Operatives Building Trade Course, organised by the Department of Building. The aim of this course is to promote an interest in general building work, to create a team spirit within the group, to encourage a sense of responsibility in individual students and to develop any special aptitudes recognised. Emphasis is placed upon practical project work and site assimilation with related knowledge applicable to and as an extension of the project. Calculations and theory are adjusted to suit the ability of the students and classwork is structured so as to encourage maximum student participation and discussion. Safe practices are stressed at all times. The syllabus for the course covers such areas as:

Preliminary Operations	Drainage
Safety	Brickwork
Excavation	Scaffolding
Measurement & Setting Out	Plumbing
Site Discipline	Plastering
Calculations	Carpentry & Joinery
Concrete Practice	Painting

Work Experience

The final component of the vocational programme at Level Three is Work Experience. The general aim of this is to enable students in the Work Orientation Unit to participate in a period of industrial experience as part of their preparation for employment. The students taking part in work experience are those for whom it is recommended as part of on-going evaluation. There is an obvious link here with social development for many students need to gain both practical and social experiences. A wide range of firms take part in the scheme over the whole catchment area for periods of time which vary from 1 day to 3/4 weeks at a time. When introducing a student to work experience, his duties and responsibilities are pointed out. Frequent contact is made with the employer and the student for assessment and discussion purposes. It becomes very noticeable that after a very short time the student becomes much more aware of the outside world and his own abilities (and limitations). His ideas tend to broaden and he makes wider social contacts, part of which help in the training and education being given at College.

Social Development

To those who are aware of the problems of handicapped school-leavers the need for self-development is very

obvious. Despite current arguments for and against the integration of handicapped children in to the main stream of education, many special schools, even day schools in large urban areas, are physically and psychologically isolated, their students subjected to a limited range of educational experiences and low expectations and, socially, little contact is made outside those people who make allowances. It is necessary therefore, to devise individual programmes of short social education courses in such areas as personal hygiene and grooming, health education, homecraft, child care, family planning, current affairs, together with more basic areas such as the use of transport, communications systems and the welfare state. Recreation also features at this stage and there is a full range of activities to which the student is introduced. All students are encouraged to participate in Students Association activities, and a Youth Club is held each week. Work Orientation Unit students, as with all College students, are encouraged to use the outdoor facilities available, both locally and wider afield, in weekday, weekend and vacation time.

As with all courses, it is not sufficient to subject a student to a varied range of experiences in the vague hope that he will benefit by them. Careful planning and structuring of courses is essential and on-going evaluation based upon noted behavioural change will feed back into the system and allow for future planning.

General Education

Many handicapped young people have experienced several years of teaching in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, often with little apparent success. We believe that further education courses which concentrate solely and exclusively on this area are not doing the best by the young people on the course, if all that they can do is offer the same educational diet, the practices and methods in environments which are sometimes less than favourable in comparison with school. This standpoint does not deny the fact that general education has a role to play in the provision of a further education curriculum for handicapped school-leavers, but it does question the emphasis placed by some colleges on school methods and approaches. What then should be the approach used by the colleges? We believe that the new environment and culture of further education can do much to change the motivational basis of general education from an extrinsic situation to an intrinsic one providing that courses are based upon reality and first-hand experiences. In this way, general education can have a vital role to play in the support of vocational and social development programmes and at the same time have the latent function of improving the general standard of literacy and numeracy.

Significant Living Without Work Courses

Many handicapped school-leavers, because of the severity of their condition or its progessive nature, will be unable to earn their living in the sense that we understand it today. Nevertheless, they have needs which are just as real as other students, for example, the severely physically handicapped person who is mentally very active. With these factors in mind, individual courses, under the heading of "Significant Living Without Work", are planned to meet the needs of particular students. For some this provision could be in the form of preparation for Open University Degree courses; for those who would like to make up for missed opportunities in the past, a full range of extension 'O' and 'A' Level subjects are available; and for those who would like the chance to develop basic standards of competency in literacy and numeracy, facilities exist for this purpose. All students are encouraged to develop their full potential in the activities of daily living and social contact, and to become involved in recreational interests and creative skills to the point where these can be pursued out of College.

(ii) **Work Orientation Unit Application Form**

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

APPLICATION FORM

Notes to aid completion

1. The enclosed letter should be sent to parents/guardians before completing the application form, and the returned authority slip attached to the completed form.

2. Sections A and B (General Information and Educational Information) should be completed by the last school attended.

3. Section C (Social Information) should be completed by the last school attended or by any Social Worker or Probation Officer involved.

4. Section D (Medical Information) should be completed as appropriate by the relevant medical officer or by the school from current records. It may be necessary to complete more that one section D.1. to D.4. and additionally D.5. because of the complexity of handicaps.

5. Section E (Vocational Information) should be completed by the referring Careers Officer.

6. Completed forms should be returned by the referring Careers Officer to:

SECTION A **GENERAL INFORMATION**

SURNAME _____ CHRISTIAN NAME/S _____

ADDRESS _____

_____ Tel. No. _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

SCHOOLS ATTENDED _____
(Past 5 years) _____

_____

NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN _____ OCCUPATION _____

NATURE OF DISABILITY/HANDICAP OF APPLICANT _____

ANY OTHER DISABILITIES/HANDICAPS _____

_____

(Please complete the appropriate form(s) in Section D for each disability, however slight it may be).

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Height: short/medium/tall
Build: slight/medium/well-built/overweight
Speech: normal/slight impairment/difficult to understand

SELF CARE

Completely independent/needs some help _____

Indicate degree of help needed _____

_____

ABILITY TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Independent/accompanied/not at all

Has own transport/uses invalid car

FOR COLLEGE USE ONLY

DATE APPLICATION FORM RECEIVED _____

INTERVIEW DATE _____

PRESENT AT INTERVIEW _____

ACTION/DATE _____

BASIS OF ACCEPTANCE _____

TRIAL PERIOD _____ WEEKS

1 YEAR _____

2 YEARS _____

DATE OF ENTRY TO COLLEGE _____

SECTION B **EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION**

I.Q. (State tests used and date)

VERBAL	NON VERBAL	FULL SCALE
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

_____

LITERACY

Current Reading Age _____

Test Used and Date _____

Comprehension _____

Oral Work _____

Written Work _____

Comments _____

NUMERACY

Current Arithmetic Age _____

Test Used and Date _____

Attainment Level in Mechanical Arithmetic _____

Ability in Money Usage _____

PRACTICAL SUBJECTS	Subjects Taken	Ability Level

EXAMINATIONS PASSED/TO BE TAKEN

GENERAL COMMENTS

SECTION C — SOCIAL INFORMATION

Is Applicant Living at Home? Yes/No

If No, give details _____

_____

HOME BACKGROUND

Both Parents at Home/One Parent at Home/Adopted/Fostered/In Care/Other (Please specify)

_____

Comments _____

_____

_____

MATURITY IN RELATION TO AGE

Very Immature/Immature/Average/Very Mature

RELATIONSHIPS

With Parents/Guardian _____

With Siblings _____

With Peers _____

With Adults _____

EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Aggression _____

Temper Control _____

Attention Seeking _____

Any Current Behaviour Problems _____

_____

_____

Any Court Appearances _____

_____

Name of Current Social Worker/Telephone Number

_____

_____

Name of Current Probation Officer/Telephone Number

Recreation & Social Interests, Clubs, Hobbies etc.

SECTION D — MEDICAL INFORMATION

D.1. PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

Nature of Handicap

Cause: Congenital/Accident/Other

Severity: Slight/Moderate/Very Severe

Duration:

Mobility: Walks Independently—Normally/Steadily/Unsteadily
Walks with aid —Crutches/Calipers/Walking Frame/Other
Wheelchair —Independent Indoors & Outdoors/Short Distance/Indoors Only

Comments

Self Care: Dressing—Independent/Needs Help/Dependent

Toilet—Independent/Needs Help/Totally Dependent

Use of Hands: Limited/Normal/Can Use One Hand Only/No Effective Use

Writing Skills: No Handwritting/Limited Handwriting/Normal Handwriting/Manual Typewriting/Electric Typewriting

Other Relevant Information:

D.2. VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Nature of Sight Condition

Cause (If Known):

Duration:

Amount of Sight

(a) Without Glasses: Left Eye _____ Right Eye _____

(b) With Glasses: Left Eye _____ Right Eye _____

Registered As: Blind Person/Partially Sighted/Neither

Colour Blindness: State Which Colours

Night Blindness: Yes/No

Degree

Visual Aids Used: Reading

Writing

Knowledge of Braille: Reading

Writing

Knowledge of Touch Typing: Manual

Electric

Mobility: Completely Independent/Independent In Own Environment/Independent Indoors Only

Is Condition Likely to: Improve/Remain Stationary/Deteriorate

Other Relevant Information: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D.3. HEARING HANDICAPPED

Degree of Hearing Loss: Partial/Profound

_____

Cause (If Known): _____

_____

Is Hearing Aid Used? Yes/No

If Yes: Type _____

Number of Aids _____

Size of Batteries Needed _____

Is there any history of Earache? Yes/No

If Yes, what action was taken and when?

_____

_____

Is there any speech impairment? Yes/No

If Yes, is speech: Understandable
(Delete as appropriate) Understandable with concentration
Incoherent

Other Relevant Information _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D.4. EPILEPSY

Degree of Disablement _____

Duration of Disablement _____

Date of first signs _____

Is the Applicant still subject to fits? _____

Is the epilepsy well controlled? _____

_____

Are Drugs Prescribed? Yes/No

If Yes: Drugs _____ Dosage _____

Do they have any side effects? _____

_____

Frequency of Fits _____

Date of Last Fit _____

Do they occur at regular intervals? _____

Do they occur whilst awake, asleep or both?

_____

Is any factor known to precipitate the fits? Yes/No

_____

If Yes: What are the warning signs? _____

_____

_____

How long before the fit do they occur? _____

_____

How long do the fits normally last? _____

What form do they take? _____

_____

What is the nature and duration of any after effects? _____

_____

_____

Is there any disturbance of behaviour or any personality problem?

D.5. HANDICAPS OTHER THAN 1–4

Nature of Handicap:

Cause if Known:

Duration:

Other Handicaps

Details

Sensory Perception: Vision

Hearing

Tactile

Other Perceptual Problems:

Any Physical Weakness:

Mobility

Use of Public Transport—Totally Independent

—Needs Help

—Cannot use Public Transport

Manual Dexterity

Limited/Average/Good

State Any Problems:

Is Speech: Understandable

Understandable with Concentration

Incoherent

Other Relevant Information _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SECTION E **VOCATIONAL INFORMATION**

Previous Employment (If Any) _____

_____

Applicant's Preference for Employment _____

_____

_____

Which of these, if any, are within the Applicant's potential?

(a) As of Now _____

_____

(b) Given Suitable Education/Training _____

_____

Action Recommended to Enable Applicant to Attain Vocational Preferences:

(a) Social/Educational _____

_____

(b) Vocational _____

_____

From Which Occupation Would Applicant be Excluded Because of Disability?:

_____

_____

Type of Occupation Ultimately Envisaged:

Interview Notes. Personality, Attitude to Work:

Parental Attitude to Employment etc.:

Name of Referring Careers Officer:

Local Authority

Tel. No.:

(iii) Work Orientation Unit Record Form (Staff Information)

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

RECORD FORM **INFORMATION TO STAFF** **CONFIDENTIAL**

NAME OF STUDENT: D.O.B.:

The particulars below are based on initial assessment

1. *Physical*	*Nature of Disability*	*Severity*	*Problems*

Key: SB = Spina Bifida SP = Spastic D = Delicate E = Epileptic M = Muscular Dystrophy
O = Other Handicaps A = No apparent physical handicap

Severity: 1 = Exceptionally Severe
2 = Moderately Severe
3 = Slight
4 = Present but should not affect performance

2. *Intelligence*	*Verbal I.Q.*	*Performance I.Q.*	*Full Scale I.Q.*
	Problems		
	Reading Age =	Arithmetic Age =	
3. *Emotional*	Assess level of maturity	Problems	
Key: 1 = Above average for age group 2 = Average 3 = Below average for age group—needs supervision 4 = Sufficiently immature for it to be a problem			
4. *Social*	Family Background	Problems	
	Degree of Socialisation	Problems	
Key: *Family Background*: 1 = Good 2 = Average 3 = Poor *Degree of Socialisation*: 1 = Mixes very well 2 = Mixes well 3 = Does not mix well 4 = Isolate			

(iv) **Work Orientation Unit Basic Student Record Form**

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

BASIC STUDENT RECORD FORM

NAME: _____ D.O.B.: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

PREVIOUS SCHOOL/EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT: _____

_____

DATE OF LEAVING SCHOOL: _____

DATE OF ENTRY TO COLLEGE: _____

BASIS OF ACCEPTANCE: Trial no. of weeks = _____ 1 Year _____ 2 Years _____

NATURE OF DISABILITY	SEVERITY	PROBLEMS

Key: SB = Spina Bifida SP = Spastic D = Delicate E = Epileptic M = Muscular Dystrophy
Df = Deaf O = Other Handicaps A = No apparent physical handicap

Severity
1 = Exceptionally severe
2 = Moderately severe
3 = Slight
4 = Present but should not affect performance

DATE OF LEAVING COLLEGE: _____

PLACEMENTS: _____

_____

_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

(v) **Work Orientation Unit Student Educational Record Form**

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

STUDENT EDUCATIONAL RECORD FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

NEALE ANALYSIS OF READING ABILITY:

	TERM								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Accuracy Age									
Comprehension Age									
Speed Age									

NUMBER ATTAINMENT: NAME OF TEST: _____

	TERM								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Arithmetic Age									

LATERALITY

Knowledge of Left/Right — Confused/Hesitant/Normal

Left *Right*

Hand Dominance

Foot Dominance

Eye Dominance

DIFFERENTIAL APTITUDE TESTS

Sub Test	*Raw Score*	*Percentile*
1. Verbal Reasoning		
2. Numerical Ability		
3. VR + NA		
4. Abstract Reasoning		
5. Clerical Spelling & Accuracy		
6. Mechanical Reasoning		
7. Space Relations		
8. Language } Spelling		
9. Use } Grammar		

(vi) Work Orientation Unit Student Social Development Record Form

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

STUDENT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT RECORD FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

ASSESSMENT ON ENTRY

<table>
<tr><td>Emotional</td><td colspan="2">Assess Level of Maturity

Problems

Key: 1 = Above average for age group
2 = Average
3 = Below average for age group—needs supervision
4 = Sufficiently immature for it to be a problem</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Social</td><td>Family Background</td><td>Problems</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Degree of Socialisation</td><td>Problems</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Key: Family Background: 1 = Good 2 = Average 3 = Poor
Degree of Socialisation: 1 = Mixes very well
2 = Mixes well
3 = Does not mix well
4 = Isolate</td></tr>
</table>

Personality Tests Used

Additional Comments

(vii) Social Education Checklist

Social Education—Checklist

Name: Class:

No.	Item	Initials	Date	Comments
1.	Name			
2.	Address			
3.	Local area			
4.	Town, village			
5.	Forename, surname, initial			
6.	Signature			
7.	Self-help—shoe laces			
8.	Tea-making			
9.	Washing crockery			
10.	,, clothes			
11.	Sew on button			
12.	Patching			
13.	Opening tins			
14.	Making toast			
15.	Wiring a plug			
16.	Nailing and screwing			
17.	Dressing			
18.	Teeth			
19.	Washing—hair			
20.	Bathing—showering			
21.	Shopping			
22.	Leisure—youth club			
23.	Cinema			
24.	Football match etc.			
25.	Swimming			
26.	Sports & other activities			
27.	Bus & bus station			
28.	Train—train station			
29.	First aid—bleeding			
30.	,, ,, —burns			
31.	,, ,, —coma position			
32.	,, ,, —artificial respiration			

Name: Class:

No.	Item	Initials	Date	Comments
33.	Body parts			
34.	Appointments			
35.	Punctuality			
36.	Letters—notes			
37.	Telephone—answers			
	,, —dials			
38.	Police			
39.	Ambulance			
40.	Fire Brigade			
41.	Radio—music			
42.	Record player			
43.	Television			
44.	Tape recorder			
45.	Personal information			
46.	Age			
47.	Sex			
48.	Parents names			
49.	Own telephone number			
50.	Height—own			
51.	Weight—own			
52.	Colouring—own			
53.	Handedness L–R			
54.	Combs hair			
55.	Cleans shoes			
56.	Neatness			
57.	Blowing nose			
58.	Eating			
59.	Toileting			
60.	Basic hygiene			

(viii) English Checklist

English—Checklist

Name:	Class:			Name:	Class:		
No. Item	Initials	Date	Comments	No. Item	Initials	Date	Comments
1. Name				32. Maps—place names			
2. Address				33. Direction—N.S.E.W.			
3. Signature				34. Appointments			
4. Birthday				35. Cancel appointments			
5. Days of the week				36. Name—doctor			
6. Months of the year				37. ,, —dentist			
7. Date				38. ,, —hospital			
8. Place of birth				39. Body parts—chest			
9. Address an envelope				40. ,, ,, —head			
10. Letter heading				41. ,, ,, —thigh			
11. Letters—notes				42. ,, ,, —shoulder			
12. Initials				43. ,, ,, —stomach			
13. Handwriting—legible				44. ,, ,, —knee, foot			
14. Printing				45. Careers Office			
15. Alphabet				46. Bus station			
16. Alphabetical order				47. Train station			
17. Dictionary				48. Library			
18. Telephone directory				49. Current affairs—news			
19. Books				50. Prime Minister			
20. Newspapers				51. M.P.			
21. Comics				52. Council			
22. Newspapers—advertisements				53. Political Party			
23. ,, —sports				54. Queen—Royal Family			
24. ,, —television				55. Common Market			
25. ,, —front page							
26. ,, —jokes							
27. Post office							
28. Bank							
29. Building Society							
30. Form filling							
31. Transport							

(ix) Social Education Assessment Record

NAME .....

AGE ..... DATE OF BIRTH ..... TUTORIAL GROUP .....

SELF HELP	5 4 3 2 1 Completes toilet inc. hair; teeth; nails; washing; etc.	5 4 3 2 1 Dresses adequately inc. choice of clothes. According to weather.	5 4 3 2 1 Finds own way. Goes errands.	5 4 3 2 1 Uses public transport.	5 4 3 2 1 Can use time-tables, maps, etc.	5 4 3 2 1
COMMUNICATION	5 4 3 2 1 Relates events in an understanding way	5 4 3 2 1 Remembers and delivers messages.	5 4 3 2 1 Answers telephone sensibly.	5 4 3 2 1 Uses public telephone.	5 4 3 2 1 Recognises coins and knows values.	5 4 3 2 1 Can receive and translate written instructions.
	5 4 3 2 1 Adds simple sums	5 4 3 2 1 Tells time and associates with actions or events.	5 4 3 2 1 Understands time intervals. Knows 24 hr. clock.	5 4 3 2 1 Able to use ruler or measuring table.	5 4 3 2 1 Recognises social sight vocabulary and understands.	5 4 3 2 1 Can write formal and nformal letters.
	5 4 3 2 1 Able to read simple printed matter	5 4 3 2 1 Can repeat, recognise and write name and address.	5 4 3 2 1 Addresses envelope—write simple letter.	5 4 3 2 1 Fill in main items on application form.	5 4 3 2 1 Manners and co-operation with others.	5 4 3 2 1
Social Integration Competance; Social attitudes and abilities	5 4 3 2 1 Makes purchases in supermarkets. Buys from shops.	5 4 3 2 1 Buys own clothes. Knows sizes. Does minor repairs.	5 4 3 2 1 Helps in the home—cleaning—dish washing.	5 4 3 2 1 Able to prepare snack meals.	5 4 3 2 1 Able to cook a meal using tins and frozen foods.	5 4 3 2 1 Basic understanding of the law. Legal rights. Hire purchase etc.

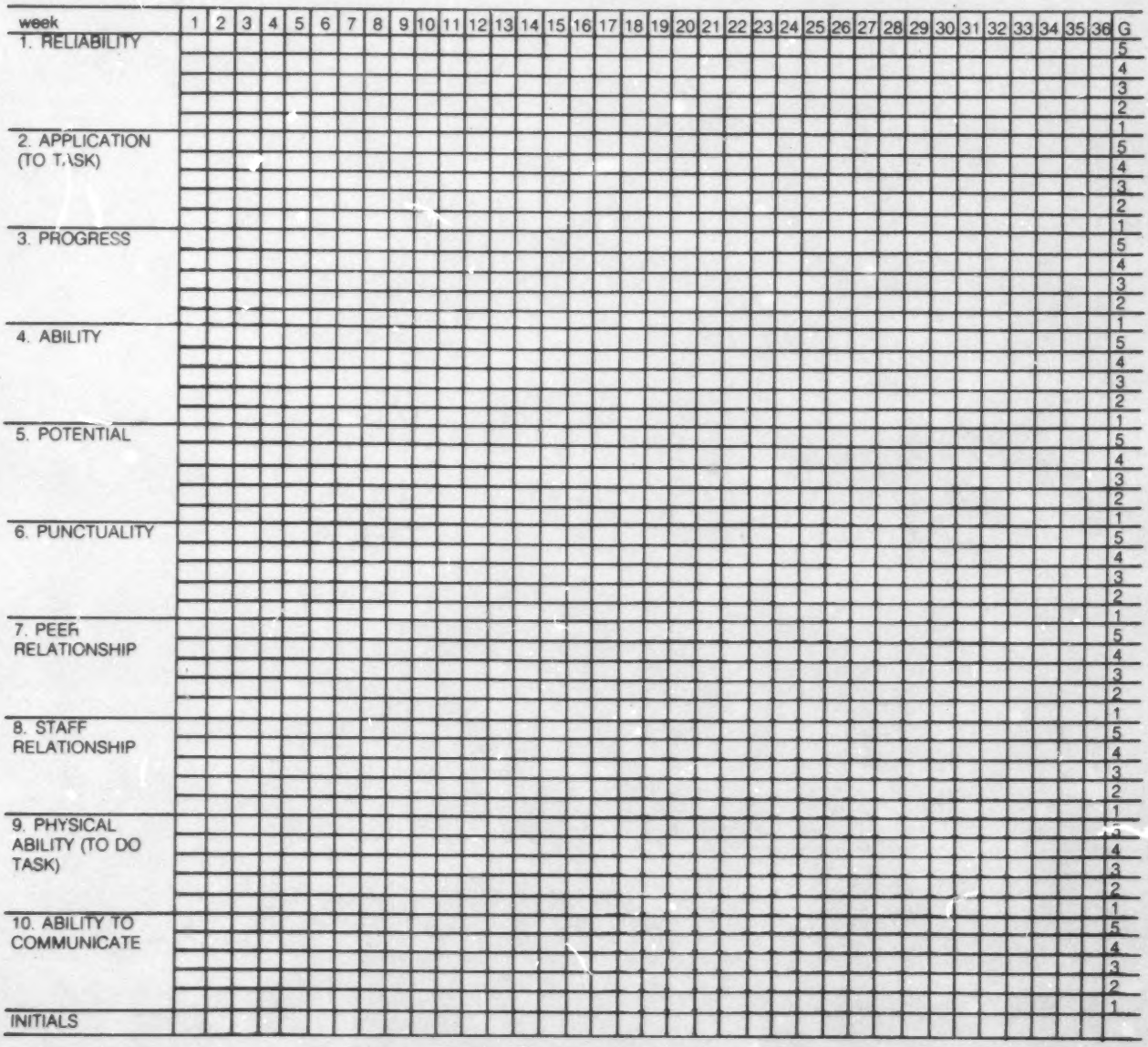
Finance and Initiative	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
	Knows postage rates for letters and where to obtain licences etc.	Saves money to some purpose by Post Office/ other bank.	Understands and uses simple budget.	Understands wage deductions.	Makes and keeps appointments with doctor, dentist, hospital, etc.	
WORK PERFORMANCE	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
	Application to work—regarding supervision	Quantity and accuracy of work.	Speed and output.	Time-keeping	Care of tools and materials.	

Progressive Scale of Assessment: 5 = Bottom of scale of achievement
1 = Top of scale of achievement

(x) Operative Workshop Assessment Record

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT—OPERATIVE WORKSHOP

ASSESSMENT SHEET


week
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 G
1. RELIABILITY
2. APPLICATION (TO TASK)
3. PROGRESS
4. ABILITY
5. POTENTIAL
6. PUNCTUALITY
7. PEER RELATIONSHIP
8. STAFF RELATIONSHIP
9. PHYSICAL ABILITY (TO DO TASK)
10. ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
INITIALS
5 4 3 2 1

(xi) Work Orientation Unit Student Progress Record

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

STUDENT PROGRESS RECORD

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ TUTORIAL GROUP: _____

PERSONAL TUTOR: _____ DATE: _____

SUBJECT: _____

GRADES					COMMENTS
1	2	3	4	5	
					SIGNED: _____

Key Grades:
1. Reliability
2. Application
3. Progress
4. Ability
5. Potential

Scale:
A. Excellent
B. Good
C. Satisfactory
D. Poor
E. Unsatisfactory

(xii) Work Orientation Unit Month-by-Month Assessment Record

WORK ORIENTATION UNIT

STUDENT _____ TUTORIAL GROUP _____ TUTOR _____

TERM _____	MONTH _____						MONTH _____						MONTH _____					
SUBJECTS	GRADE 1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS	GRADE 1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS	GRADE 1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS

Key Grades:
1. Reliability
2. Application
3. Progress
4. Ability
5. Potential

Scale:
A. Excellent
B. Good
C. Satisfactory
D. Poor
E. Unsatisfactory

Social Development Sheltered Environment (College, Home etc.)													Open Environment (Visits, Work Experience etc.)											
Month			Month			Month			Month				Month			Month			Month			Month			
Grade			Grade			Grade			Grade				Grade			Grade			Grade			Grade			
1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
												Maturity and responsibility												
												Independence												
												Dress and appearance												
												Ability to communicate												
												Attitude to others												
												Response to adverse criticism and constructive advice												

Comments and Special Area for Follow up:

WORK INDUCTION AND EXPERIENCE

	Month			Month			Month			Month			Comments
	Grade			Grade			Grade			Grade			
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	
Acquisition of work													
Induction Skills													
Readiness for work (Experience)													
Work Experience Situation													

Special Area for Follow up:

Appendix 6 Case Study 2

This Appendix relates to Case Study 2 and contains:

(i) General Education and Vocational Training Course Timetable

(ii) Preliminary Progress Report for a College Class

(iii) Work Introduction Course Information Bulletin

(i) General Education and Vocational Training Course Timetable

CLASS ETHBIF–SESSION 1981–1982

	9.00 10.00 11.00	11.15 12.15	12.45 1.45 2.45	3.00 3.30 4.30
MONDAY	UPHOLSTERY	UPHOLSTERY	HORTICULTURE	HORT. P.E.
TUESDAY	INDUSTRIAL SEWING	INDUSTRIAL SEWING	DAILY LIVING SKILLS	DAILY LIVING SKILLS
WEDNESDAY	HORTICULTURE	LIFE SKILLS	DAILY LIVING SKILLS	DAILY LIVING SKILLS
THURSDAY	UPHOLSTERY	LIFE SKILLS	WORKSHOP	WORKSHOP
FRIDAY	TUTORIAL LIFE SKILLS	LIFE SKILLS	INDUSTRIAL SEWING	INDUSTRIAL SEWING 4.00 FINISH ON FRIDAY

(ii) Preliminary Progress Report Sheet for a College Class

COLLEGE CLASS ETHBIF: PRELIMINARY PROGRESS REPORT OCTOBER 1981

	LIFE SKILLS	UPHOLSTERY	INDUSTRIAL SEWING	P.E.	DAILY LIVING SKILLS	HORTICULTURE	WORKSHOP
STUDENT A	Eager to learn - Can read and spell well Weak on number		Tries hard. She tends to be very nervous of machines		Interested - making good progress		
STUDENT B	Tries hard Good progress Fair reader and writer Fair on number	Good Worker Shows interest at all times	V. quick to learn. Good on measurement		Has made a good start seems to enjoy subject		MAKING GOOD PROGRESS - A BIT SLOW
STUDENT C	Must wear his Spectacles Hard working slow and untidy Good reader Poor at number tables has much of his correction	Could work a bit harder Shows not much interest	Has ability but needs to wear his spectacles for this type of work		Good start. Could work a little quicker		MUCH IMPROVED NOW THAT HE WEARS HIS GLASSES
STUDENT D	Fair reader Good writer Keen to learn Fair on number	Very good Worker. Shows a lot of effort.	Q. good with machines but rather poor at measuring & accuracy.		Has made a good start Good at dressing up		INTERESTED BUT RATHER SLOW
STUDENT E	She has problem Many facts and figures due to illness. Is making average progress in reading writing and number	a bit slow, but shows interest	Neat worker. Tries hard, but has some difficulty on machines.		Has made a good start Appears to enjoy subject		KEEN TO LEARN NEEDS TO DEVELOP HER STRENGTH
STUDENT F	She is very neat quick and has good attitude Good reader Good writer Work is quite good at number	She tries Very hard. good pupil	Good attitude in class. Fair on machines.		Has made a good start Seems to enjoy the subject		GOOD AT HAND SKILLS

(iii) Work Introduction Course Information Booklet

WORK INTRODUCTION COURSE

1 **Introduction**—The course is designed to help young unemployed school leavers who because they suffer from physical, mental or emotional difficulties, or lack motivation, maturity, self or social competence, or have emerged from school with low educational attainments, will not satisfy the minimum selection criteria of employers for even routine unskilled jobs. The course will include provision for up to *3 or 4 ESN(M) students* but will not cater for ESN(S) students or those who have *severe educational problems.* Emphasis throughout the course will be on the development of the individuals' vocational, social and life skills. The maximum number on the course at any time will be 12. The course will commence on January 6th 1980. It will be a "rolling" course lasting 36 weeks but will for most students be of 13 weeks duration. The course could however be extended up to 26 weeks for one or two students if officials of the Training Services Division, Careers Office and college jointly consider this is in the best interest of the student. The course may be of less than 13 weeks where it is felt students are ready for employment or other courses on the Y.O.P. Case conferences will be held at least once per term. Clients will be recruited by the Careers Office in conjunction with the Employment Service Division of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) and interviewed by staff of the College and the Training Division of the MSC. The Course will operate 32 hours per week.

2 **Aims of the course**—

(a) To prepare the students for full integration into society, by reaching out towards their maximum potential.
(b) To adequately prescribe the necessary training in order to achieve the skills, aptitudes, interests and personal-social attitudes for acceptable functioning in open employment.
(c) To effect adequate careers guidance in conjunction with the Careers Service, Disablement Resettlement Officer, employer and other interested agencies.

3 **College facilities**—The college is well established and is organised on the basis of three departments:

Automobile and Mechanical Engineering—The main areas of work include: Mechanical Engineering Technicians and Craft Courses, Engineering Industrial Training Board Courses, Motor Vehicle Technicians and Craft Courses.

Business and General Studies Department—The main areas of work include: Business Studies, Retail Distribution Courses, Typing, Clerical and Secretarial Courses, G.C.E. 'O' and 'A' level courses and General Studies.

Social and Community Services Department—The main areas of work include: Horticulture Technicians courses, courses for handicapped students, G.C.E. 'O' and 'A' level courses, Social Services in-service work, Residential Care and Nursery Nursing.

The College is well equipped for work simulation in many areas and its facilities include a supermarket and a model office. There are also workshops for both light and heavy vehicle work, tool making, and work of a repetitive nature including presswork, woodwork and industrial sewing. There is also a horticulture section which includes a number of greenhouses, potting sheds and a large area of cultivated land which provides work of a horticultural and general nature. These facilities will be used and modified where necessary to enable the students to follow individual work programmes which will be derived from the following syllabus:

4 **Syllabus**—The syllabus will be as follows:

Induction period:—Introduction to course. Safety at work (this will be continuously stressed through the programme). College rules *and* regulations.

Assessment—The young people will be assessed during the early stages of their course in order to determine their training needs. The assessment will form the basis for planning the subsequent progress of the trainees through the course. It will include:

(a) Physical and medical capabilities
(b) Educational attainment
(c) General intelligence level
(d) Special abilities and aptitudes in such areas as:
  (i) spatial ability
  (ii) mechanical reasoning
  (iii) clerical speed and accuracy
  (iv) form perception
  (v) manual dexterity
  (vi) motor co-ordination
  (vii) finger dexterity

(e) Interests and vocational preferences
(f) Disposition, temperament and personal qualities
(g) Other relative circumstances e.g. family background and home area employment potential.

Training in basic skills—Training in basic skills will form the core of the course and provide a suitable vehicle for motivating the young people to take advantage of the instruction provided in social and life skills, number and communications.

Practical skills will be taught in—Woodwork, Metalwork, Typing, Catering and household skills, General activities, Assembly work (electrical and mechanical), Industrial sewing and Retailing.

Woodwork Objective: To help the student to understand and appreciate the production processes of practical woodwork items such as garden sheds, garden furniture, seed trays etc. The student will undertake simple tasks and learn basic skills which will include: Tools—their use and care; Simple joints and their application; Workshop practice; Wood finishing; Assembly work.

Metalwork Objective: To help the student to understand and appreciate engineering processes of an operative and repetitive nature. The student will undertake simple tasks which will include Filing, Chiselling, Simple press work, Introduction to the Capstan lathe, Drilling and simple assembly work.

Typing Objective: To familiarise the student with the typewriter and to stress its use for personal and business use. The student will be given simple keyboard instruction and exercises in typing e.g. simple sentence including punctuation.

Catering and Household Skills Objective: To provide a vehicle for the acquisition of good work habits and the use of number and literacy in a motivating activity with a view to employment in industrial catering i.e. canteens, cafes etc. Instruction will include: Use and care of tools; Preparation, assembly of materials, tools and equipment in readiness for work; Planning of suitable sequences of activities; Practice of social and communicative skills; Practice of hygiene and tidiness in the workshop/kitchen situation; Weights and measures and simple budgeting.

General Activities Objective: To introduce students to a wide range of activities and skills of a general or labouring nature. The preparation of a range of horticultural composts, unit wooden containers, cold frame structures, garden ornaments i.e. concrete bird baths, troughs and ornamental bricks. The preparation of horticultural sundries such as grow-bags, growing packs etc. Students will be introduced to horticultural crop grading, presentation and retailing. Maintenance of out-buildings including painting and decorating. Store keeping, record keeping.

Assembly Work Objective: To introduce students to work requiring simple assembly of electrical or mechanical parts. Instruction will include: Use and care of tools, Working to written instruction, Use of jigs and fixtures, Soldering, Testing and checking.

Industrial Sewing Objective: To provide students with an insight into the production of simple garments. Instruction will include: Use and care of the machine, Setting up the machine, Types of stitching used and the techniques required for different types of material.

Retailing Objective: To introduce students to shop work. Instruction will include: Introduction to retailing, Selling, Handling of money, Keeping of stock records, Display and Security.

5 **Life and Social Skills Objective:** To ensure that students are given the opportunity to develop the ability to: communicate, cope with adult life, cope with calculations associated with various jobs, seek jobs successfully and obtain and retain employment. Also to develop a knowledge of local facilities. This aspect of the course will be based on concepts set out in the M.S.C.'s Instructional Guide to Social and Life Skills and instruction will be closely related to the world of work and in particular to seeking, obtaining and retaining employment.

6 **Number and Communications**—Tuition in this subject will be in with the vocational training and will take place mainly on the shop floor. Additional tuition will however be provided in a specially designed resource centre for those students who will benefit.

7 **Work Experience and Industrial Visits to Local Employers**—In addition to the skills already stated the college will offer student work experience for half a day per week, during the early part of the course. This will take place in offices, canteens, workshops, grounds and elsewhere. Work will include kitchen hand, portering, reception, technician assistant and gardening. Towards the end of the course certain students may also, where it would be an advantage, be offered work experience with a local employer for one day per week. Visits to employers' premises will constituate an integral part of

the course but will not exceed one half day per week and will be relevant to the types of skills taught on the course.

8 **Conclusion:** The above programme is prepared on the basis that much of the work available to the clients described will have to be of a general, operative or repetitive nature. Information provided by the Careers Office suggests that work does exist in industrial sewing, assembly, car cleaning, gardening, portering, site cleaners, cleaning, machine work, woodwork etc. The job market will however be continuously explored and changes to the programme will be recommended as and when this is felt necessary.

Appendix 7 Case Study 3

This Appendix contains the Special School Link Courses Information Booklet related to Case Study 3

Special School Link Courses Information Booklet

SPECIAL SCHOOL LINK COURSES 1980–1981

1 Student Selection

Students must be willing to spend a day a week in college and able to benefit from a more adult atmosphere and contacts with 'non-special' students.

They must be attending schools whose concurrent provision complements but does not duplicate their college course.

They will be referred individually by their schools to the college, interviewed and selected by the course tutor.

2 Provision

There will be four courses:— A—ESN(M), B—ESN(M), C—Maladjusted and D—Delicate/Handicapped.

Courses A and B will both be one-day-a-week courses starting in September, 1980. The students on these courses will be ESN(M), mostly relatively able, 50% male/50% female.

There will be no more than 12 students in each course.

The two courses will run in parallel on Fridays from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. (5 teaching hours, 1 hour lunch) for two terms. (Two 'second-wave' courses will run from Easter to Christmas 1981, and so on.)

They will each comprise:

2 hours social and life skills, careers and tutorial 1 hour basic manipulative skills	a.m.
2 hours tasters	p.m.

The tasters will be arranged as follows:

	Term 1 (September–Christmas 1980)		Term 2 (January–Easter 1981)	
	Friday 1–2 p.m.	2–3 p.m.	Friday 1–2 p.m.	2–3 p.m.
Course A	cooking	woodwork	needlework	retail/ reception
Course B	needlework	retail/ reception	cooking	woodwork

Course C will be a one-day-a-week provision starting in September, 1980.

The course group will consist of not more than 10 maladjusted students, all male.

The course will run on Mondays from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. (5 teaching hours, 1 hour lunch) for two terms, i.e. until Easter 1981. (A 'second-wave' course will run from Easter to Christmas 1981, and so on.)

The course will comprise:

2 hours social and life skills, careers and tutorial 1 hour craft skills (mostly woodwork)	a.m.
2 hours physical education, integrated with "non-special" group(s)	p.m.

Course D will be a limited provision for delicate/handicapped students. These students will be individually timetabled for one day a week in part-time classes for 'non-special' students. They will meet as a group each week for a one-hour session of social and life skills, careers and tutorial. No day of attendance has yet been chosen for this course; it is likely to be Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, depending on which of these days offers the best selection of part-time classes.

Length of attendance will be discretionary, up to three terms, starting in September, 1980.

3 Course Elements

(i) Social and life skills

The aims will be:

(a) to familiarise the students with a range of adult social situations, including work and further study in college;

(b) to improve the students' readiness and ability to relate to unfamiliar people for specific purposes;

(c) to develop the students' literacy and numeracy for practical purposes in adult life.

(ii) Careers

The aims will be:

(a) to provide direct experience of working life and jobs;

(b) to enable the students to relate their own qualities, competences and interests to possible jobs;

(c) to provide students with opportunities to discuss themselves, their experiences, their intentions and their prospects.

(iii) **Tutorial**

The aim will be to provide couselling and support for individual students.

(iv) **Basic manipulative skills**

The aim will be to develop the students' skills in the use of simple tools and materials.

(v) **Tasters**

The assignments will:

(a) be short, simple and safe;

(b) give an immediate sense of achievement;

(c) suggest adult work;

(d) encourage autonomy;

(e) incorporate basic communication and numeracy skills which can be 'picked up' and reinforced in social and life skills time.

Social and life skills and careers will include a substantial proportion of learning by direct experience, some of it outside college. Many of the teaching ideas here, as for basic manipulative skills and tasters, will need to be worked out specifically for slow learners.

4 Course Tutors

Courses A, B and C will each have a course tutor who will:

(i) play a major part in the social and life skills, careers and tutorial elements;

(ii) counsel students individually;

(iii) be responsible for external liaison: with schools, fixing visits to workplaces, etc;

(iv) be responsible for internal liaison: with members of the course team (and in the case of Course C with the relevant physical education teacher).

Course D will have a tutor who will:

(i) provide a weekly one-hour tutorial for the student group;

(ii) counsel students individually;

(iii) be responsible for external liaison: with schools, fixing visits to workplaces, etc.

(iv) be responsible for internal liaison with the teachers in whose part-time classes the students are placed.

5 Course Teams

The course team will comprise all the teachers who make a specifically-designed contribution to the course (i.e. social and life skills, careers, tutorial, basic manipulative skills, tasters).

The course team will meet regularly to consider:

(i) teaching approaches and ideas;

(ii) student progress.

Appendix 8 Case Study 4

This Appendix relates to Case Study 4 and contains:

(i) Education and Training for Low Achievers Course, Report for 1979–80

(ii) Education and Training for Low Achievers Course, Report for 1980–81

(iii) Student Record Form

(iv) Assessment Day Information Booklet

(v) Assessment Day Record Form

(vi) Report on School Leavers for the Careers Service

(1) Education and Training for Low Achievers Course, Report for 1979–80

Report on the first Warnock-type (Basic Work Preparation) Course at Case Study 4 College of Technology, Sept. 1979–July 1980

This type of course is comparatively new and the LEA authorised two such courses to be introduced at this time.

Pupils leaving ESN schools at 16 fall roughly into three groups:

(1) those who have benefited a great deal from remedial education and are easily assimilated into the general population,
(2) those of very low ability who are unlikely to hold down jobs and will probably stay at home or go to training centres, and
(3) those who fall between the above two groups and might 'make it' with extra aid.

This course was aimed at providing this aid. Selection was left to the schools as being the best agencies for recognising such pupils. The specialist careers officer for the handicapped was also closely involved, acting as a a moderator, advertising the course and looking after supplementary benefits arrangements etc. Later in the course she advised on employment possibilities and took responsibility for the unemployed students at the course's completion.

With teachers from the schools concerned, their assigned careers officers and educational psychologists, the specialist careers officer was also instrumental in organising an Assessment Day when potential students tackled a range of tasks and overall pictures of their strengths and weaknesses emerged. These showed the individual bases to be worked from. Essentially self esteem needed to be raised and various confidence-boosting activities were utilised to this end.

The first term concentrated on gaining an understanding of the students particularly their occupational potential and temperament.

The main activities were:

(a) developing and maintaining attained levels of literacy and numeracy—particularly the occupational necessities (e.g. job applications, time sheets, pay slips, budgeting etc.), and
(b) putting the students through various practical exercises (using sewing machines and hand tools, painting, wallpapering, assembly work, upholstery, macrame, making paper flowers etc.)

There was constant attitudinal shaping and responsibility given where possible.

A natural competitive spirit emerged (which was very interesting as it was not the most able students who were the first to get jobs). Standards were also set in general courtesy, and manner. Stress was laid on the fact that people need to get along well with each other at work, and being pleasant, able to take a joke, and not being hyper-critical should add to one's acceptability.

In the second and third terms the above continued; topics such as travel, holidays, courtship and marriage were also discussed. All of the students were now introduced to weekly Work Experience on employers' premises. This was between one and five days a week depending on individual circumstances. Students were moved around both to give them a wider knowledge of jobs and to enable them to make comparisons. Living in an era of redundancies students could well find themselves unemployed in the future and the more jobs they had tried and understood then the more jobs they should be able to consider.

Each week students reported their feelings and progress (and job descriptions) to the group. Reactions sometimes changed considerably. Likes turned to dislikes and vice versa. Sometimes employers' reports did not correlate with students' ideas of their progress. Weaknesses reported by companies were worked on at the college in attempts to improve performance and 'employability'. Within W.E., companies' pressures differed and students had to make their own adjustments. Upon analysis many students reported enjoying jobs more for their good workmates rather than liking what they were actually doing.

Individual re-appraisals of abilities, interests, experiences and opportunities were made continually with the students. W.E. changes or extensions were thus calculated in cooperation as far as possible. Students generally faced up to their prejudices very well and there were very few W.E. non attendances. All learned that jobs have routines and there are sometimes things that have to be done though one is not too keen to start them. Ideally, companies might offer employment positions to satisfactory students but naturally this could not be anticipated. However two students did commence employment with their W.E. employers before the end of the course, quite

satisfactorily, and other offers were made. Some Personnel Officers were quite ready to give references for students although unable to employ them. The W.E. component was vital to the course's success and we are very grateful to the twenty employers who helped train the students.

An open afternoon was held midway through the course for parents, teachers, and careers officers to meet students and staff and review progress.

Twelve students enrolled; one clearly had employment difficulties and moved to a training centre. Of the ten 'regular' attenders, six were in employment at the end of the course. With unemployment a real problem in the area a figure of 60% is very gratifying. In explaining the course to employers the term 'Educationally Subnormal' was open to misinterpretation and consequently the name for 1980–81 is being changed to ETLA (Education and Training for Low Achievers). It is hoped that this will simplify things.

I have been very ably assisted by the lecturers in literacy and numeracy.

Course Tutor

(ii) Education and Training for Low Achievers Course, Report for 1980–81

Report on the Education and Training for Low Achievers Course (Further Education for young people with Special Needs) at Case Study 4 College of Technology, Sept. 1980–July, 1981

This was the second course for 16–19 year olds with Special Educational Needs that the College has provided. Whilst the basic aims and ideals of the course were unaltered the unemployment situation did affect many facets.

Students had to be employable and as before were from the 'middle band' of ESN(M) leavers. (The upper band of leavers assimilates quite well with the working population and the lower band tends towards ESN(S) and has very limited employment potential). Selection was through the careers service with the specialist careers officer for the handicapped co-ordinating. Relationships with the Special Schools are excellent.

Curriculum Structure

Main aim is to raise self-esteem (a) at college, (b) at home, (c) at work, and (d) with friends, through:

Practical Exercises—use of tools/materials, measuring, making, developing hand/eye co-ordination. The practical work is of a Do-It-Yourself level and has no craft pretensions.

Sport—developing hand/eye co-ordination plus widening of horizons for knowledge/social involvement/self-esteem.

Literacy—maintaining existing levels and developing specific skills e.g. form filling, letters of application etc.

Numeracy—as above, as with time sheets, measuring, cost calculation, use of calculators included.

Work Experience—vital component bringing together the abilities to transport oneself to a company, follow instructions, develop simple skills, converse with strangers, work longer hours, and win respect through enthusiasm and pleasantness if not for accuracy and understanding.

Simulated workshop conditions—at college—work being undertaken for companies, or own 'production'. Natural champions emerge for particular tasks, adding to self-esteem.

Nursery School Experience—for female students only. Excellent maturational instrument. Student socialises with older women and is regarded as such by the infants.

Education for Unemployment—eventual unemployment somewhat devalues the course. Unemployed ex-students would find it difficult to maintain their self esteem and levels of employability.

Teamwork of lecturer-student-parents-employer stressed throughout with parental contacts maintained, including home visits. Teenagers sometimes seem to undergo a natural rebellion against parents, and parents have the problem of accommodating emerging adults with many childish ways, who have always been children to them. Being ESN might prolong or even prevent such acceptance.

Please see attached list of **Activities** undertaken.

Student Details

Enrolled	15
Dropped out of Course	5
To Residential F.E.	1
To YOPS	2
To Employment	1
Unemployed	6

Of the ten regular attenders only one was in work at the end of the Course, compared with six out of ten last year. A great deal of time has been spent on the employment aspect without reward. The unemployment situation is certainly hitting young people. With mainly girl students extra openings have been needed that have been very hard to find. The vast majority of approaches have been unfruitful, in fact only three new companies have been found during the entire year. Into the bargain a local company has ceased operations, and they had looked after our students extremely well; there is also competition from schools and the YOPS groups. Sixteen companies were involved with the course and we are very grateful to them.

Most of the girl students also attended a Nursery School on a regular basis, showing considerable enthusiasm and doing far more than was originally intended. The Nursery School Head Teachers actively encouraged the students in many ways and enriched their lives considerably. This was one of the many instances when the Warnock plea for 'preparation for significant living' was apparent and rewarding.

We are very grateful to the Comprehensive School for the use of the Sports Centre and to the teacher who voluntarily assisted in the sports sessions.

Once again I have been very ably assisted by staff members in literacy and numeracy who both also spent a lot of time in companies checking on students' progress.

Course Tutor

Course of Education and Training for Low Achievers—students with Special Needs
1980–81

Activities during the course

upholstery—detacking, hand and electric tacking. keeping of weekly time sheets. painting—sanding, filling, staining, sealing, preparation, brush care. tennis. wallplugging. crosswords. volleyball. map references. wonderwords. badminton. dexion shelving team assignments. self appraisal. balloon volleyball. local geography. job assessments. job applications. pay slips. sewing machining. handsewing. tabletennis. community familiarisation. study of local newspapers. simple car maintenance — checks of oil, water, batteries, fanbelt, hoses, fluid levels where possible. tyres. squash. reading for understanding. self-portraits (pencil drawn), sideface, frontface, and of tutor. non-verbal communication. physical fitness. sports centre visits. recipes. quizzes. flow-chart comprehension. sawing—hand and electric. surname origins. swimming. self-attitudes. holidays. drilling. spirograph. wiring electric plug to light socket—electricity circuitry. arithmetic puzzles. changing car wheels. work experience reports. geographic field trip. soft toy manufacture. renovating furniture. bingo. job attitudes. telephone usage. making handbags. personal hygiene. ambitions. coffee rota. responsibilities of adulthood. simple potplants. hockey. visit to Post Office—(Head Post Office). typing. stencilling. using calculators. drawing. setting tables. lettering. reading aloud. following instructions. fashion and dress-sense. letter-writing. calendar making. listening skills. macrame. making belts. mobiles. time-telling. 24 hour clock. decorating flower pots. scrabble. finger-mazes. self-esteem questionnaire. decorating eggs. tour of the local newspaper office. painting large storage tins. visit to College Training Restaurant and kitchen (luncheon included). upholstering chair backs. Parents Open Day. interviews at careers office. employment interviews. work abilities, attitudes and interests. dirty jobs—cleaning gutters and blocked sink.

(iii) Student Record Form

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

C.T.L.A. Course,

STUDENT RECORD

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Year .....

Previous School .....

Date of Birth .....

From school	Course developments
Physique and Health	
Literacy	
Numeracy	
Practical skills	
Interests	
Sociability	
General	

Work Experience

Proceeded to .....

.....

.....

(iv) Assessment Day Information Booklet

ASSESSMENT DAYS: ESN(M) SCHOOL LEAVERS

Two assessment days for school leavers whose current placement after school is difficult to decide, are held annually in the county. Since its inception in 1977, the assessment has become a regular feature in the Special Schools Calendar.

In the autumn of each year, the specialist careers officer (handicapped), together with the local careers officer, visits each school, and after discussion with the head and careers teacher, four children from each are selected to take part. Obvious candidates for open employment or for the adult training centres run by Social Services are not included.

Twelve children are assessed on each occasion and the assessment team consists of eleven staff, three constant members:

(a) specialist careers officer
(b) educational psychologist

} who, together with the Adviser in Special Education, were involved in the original planning

(c) The Principal Consultant, Day Care, Social Services and others—careers teachers, educational psychologists and careers officers—all involved with the schools concerned, and tutors from the Work Preparation Courses for ESN(M) leavers run by two colleges in the country.

As soon as the staff and students are agreed, the specialist careers officer plans the programme and timetable, which are then sent to all participants.

Early in the spring term letters are sent out to parents informing them that the opportunity has arisen for their son or daughter to be included on an assessment day. So far, no parent has raised any objection and most have taken up the offer to discuss their child's performance later on in the term.

In explaining the day to the young people, every

effort is made to put the assessment over as a day to be spent finding out what they can do and trying out new things. The words 'test', 'pass' and 'fail' are not relevant and not used. In retrospect, most of the youngsters enjoy the day and the experience of meeting new people. Each child is 'paired' with one from another school and stays with this partner for all tasks. Although the situation is strange to all the candidates, it is interesting to see how well the majority react.

Each member of staff is allocated a task and the children rotate around the tasks with their partners.

(1) Template—15 minutes	Fit wood template on to paper provided—draw round and cut out.
(2) Design—15 minutes	A design made by joining dots with straight lines has to be copied exactly.
(3) Money—15 minutes	Identifying coins, adding amounts, giving change, shopping exercises.
(4) Time—15 minutes	Telling time, using clocks with a variety of faces. Digital clock, 24 hour clock, usage, length of week, fortnight, month.
(5) Measuring—15 minutes	Length, depth, measuring round, selecting correct measuring tool, rule or tape. Drawing measured shapes, identifying inches, centimetres.
(6) Weighing—15 minutes	Weigh given amounts in ounces and grammes. Weigh out amounts on request. Own weight, size of clothes.
(7) Sorting—30 minutes	(a) Speed—items to be sorted as quickly as possible, assessed by weight in time allowed. (b) Discrimination—18 types of screws and nails (3 of each type) to be sorted. 2 trials: a faster time to be achieved the second time; errors are counted.
(8) Dexion—30 minutes	Candidates are asked to copy a sample shape made of Dexion—exactly—each is given a set of components but no physical help given.
(9) Packing—15 minutes	Cardboard shapes are to be made into boxes and the correct contents inserted—as many as possible to be completed in time allowed.
(10) Terminals—15 minutes	Terminals are to be attached to screws on a board with washers or nuts. Demonstration given with verbal instructions—as many have to be completed as possible.

The tasks are not standardised, except that each task is presented in exactly the same manner to each candidate. If the instructions need to be repeated, this is done and a note made, the child's approach and response being considered more important.

Comments are collected from all staff under the following headings:—

Independence—did the candidate need support from staff member?

Ability to follow instructions—verbal or a demonstration

Distractability—or persistence

Accuracy—ability to see errors and correct them

Adaptability

Attitude to tasks and to staff member

Sociability during the day
Speech and communication
} especially observed during lunch and coffee breaks

These aspects of the assessment are considered as important as the results of tasks.

Once the children have been returned to their schools the staff members return for the summing up session. This takes the form of a discussion with each individual child being considered in turn, their own teachers com-

ment on any differences in behaviour seen during the day from that observed in school. Agreement is usually reached upon the most appropriate next step after school.

Recommendations have included

(1) to stay on at school;

(2) to attend Further Education Unit in a residential setting;

(3) to attend a one year Work Preparation Course for Slow Learners;

(4) to attend an adult training centre—Social Services;

(5) to attend an Industrial Therapy Unit;

(6) to seek open employment of a special type;

(7) to seek work experience on employer's premises;

(8) to attend a residential assessment course which included social training;

(9) to take part in adult literacy and numeracy schemes.

In addition, referrals have been made for speech therapy, physiotherapy, psychiatric advice via the school medical service, social work support and that children should have their sight and hearing tested.

These recommendations and results of the tasks are recorded on the right hand side of a specially designed form—the left hand side completed by the school beforehand, which includes results of a reading test and a mathematics check list.

Each parent is offered an interview when the results of the assessment and recommendations are discussed. If the suggested placement is agreed the form accompanies any application made, and gives a useful picture of the child to the staff concerned.

The assessment days are valuable aids in deciding a pupil's placement after school and help to set a common standard for the Work Preparation Courses for ESN(M) across the county. It enables the "professionals" involved to get to know the young people and each other in an informal, practical setting. Some young people have pleasantly surprised their own teachers who know them well, while others have unexpectedly found the situation most difficult. It enables the careers staff to have more insight into the child's personality and to assess and discuss strengths and weaknesses relative to possible work situations. Decisions and suggestions are readily made between departments when the personnel involved have been concerned in the decision making procedure.

Parents appreciate the interest taken in their children and seem more easily able to accept a recommendation after an assessment.

Specialist CO (Handicapped)

(v) Assessment Day Record Form

ASSESSMENT OF HANDICAPPED SCHOOL LEAVERS

NAME "Sally Jones" D.o.B. _____

Address _____ SCHOOL _____

School Report: date _____ Assessment Day: date _____

ENGLISH

Spar Reading Test Reading Age: NEALE R.A. 122

Comments on Reading progress Good
Reads quickly and accurately for pleasure and information.

Comprehension of Reading
Good. Can understand text

Written Work Can write an account, letter etc. Presentation poor. Spells phonetically.

MATHEMATICS

Accurate Counting
to 20 ✓ / 50 ✓ / 100 ✓

Practical work to 20
Addition/Subtraction ✓ ✓

Practical Multiplication
× 2 ✓ / 3 ✓ / 4 / 5 ✓ / 10 ✓

Practical Sharing/Grouping
÷ 2 ✓ / 3 / 4 / 5 / 10

Practical Fractions
halves ✓ / quarters ✓ / thirds / tenths

Recording amount in figures to 100 ✓

Recording simple
+ ✓ / − ✓ / × ✓ / ÷

Recorded Work Tens and Units
+ ✓ / − ✓ / × / ÷
✓ ✓

Application Form Did form well - no problems. Gave good information

Design Reasonably well but needed to correct her errors.

Template
Drawing No problem. Careful and confident

Cutting No problems - not so careful cutting out

Box Assembly ✓

Packing ✓ No support needed. Fast and accurate. Eager

Dexion Task Quick, confident. 28 mins.
Related well while working
Matched her work against model

Terminal Board Methodical. Good control
Good Manipulative skills.

Sorting Speed 790 Secs
Fast - one of the best
used right hand initially changed to both. Concentrated very hard.

Percentages

Measuring
Not accurate—metric or imperial

Sorting Discrimination 1st 4.16 no errors
2nd 3.17 no errors
Visual problem? Hold head at odd angle
Measuring—use of measuring devices
metric / Other use of tape and inches understood depth.

Time:
Telling time VG / (G) / D / U

Time—use of clocks:
Face Number ✓ / Marks ✓ / Roman ✓ / Digital ✓
Calendar Fine. O.K.

Money knowledge:
Giving change VG / (G) / D / U

Recording Money Transactions
to — 10p ✓ / £1 ✓ / £5 ✓ / £100

Money: All correct
Identification coins cheerfully confident
Value coins
Adding amounts to: 20p ✓ / 50p ✓ / £1 ✓
Giving change: 10p ✓ / 20p ✓ / 50p ✓ / £1 ✓

Practical Ability and any Specific Difficulties noted:
Woodwork. No specific difficulties, but not very confident.
Home Economics. Enjoys subject but lacks confidence.

Weighing Test: Confused 1lb kilos and ozs grams. No idea of clothes size

Understanding verbal instructions:
VG / (G) / D / U

Working without supervision:
(VG) / G / D / U

Timekeeping:
(VG) / G / D / U

Working at Speed:
VG / G / (D) / U

Ability to follow instructions Good

Independence Good

Distractibility—Persistence Well motivated — keen

Accuracy

Attitude Positive

Social & Personal Adjustment

Maturity Reserved, but quite adult in outlook.

Attitude to Authority
Good. Helpful

Attitude to Responsibility
Generally helpful & good.

Sociability during day

Pleasant likeable. Easy to talk to with peers and adults

Speech and Communication Stutters, particularly when nervous – but can express own ideas quite forcefully	Speech and Communication Related and spoke well to others although stuttered
Work Experience Dog kennels – 2 weeks	Part-time Employment

PROSPECT

Open Employment

- ☐ With/Without Day Release ☐
- ☑ Training leading to Open Employment ☐
- ☐ Sheltered Employment leading to Open Employment ☐
- ☐ Sheltered Employment ☐

ANY OTHER COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
	? Visual problems Holds head at wrong angle Course work possibilities Much more adult and mature today than sometimes

(vi) Report on School Leavers for the Careers Service

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT ON SCHOOL LEAVERS FOR THE CAREERS SERVICE

SURNAME:
ADDRESS:

OTHER NAMES:
DATE OF BIRTH:
ADMITTANCE DATE:

PARENT OR GUARDIAN

ATTENDANCE

Home conditions and family background

Health and Physique

Educational Attainments

Reading
- Words
- Simple Sentence
- Books
- Newspaper

Comprehension

Written
- Copy only
- Words
- Sentences

Arithmetic
- Mental

Measuring
Telling Time

Money—Giving Change

PRACTICAL ABILITY

OTHER SCHOOL SUBJECTS/WORK EXPERIENCE

General Ability I.Q. (Date)

Aptitudes e.g. words/figures/mechanical/manual/practical/drawing/music/domestic

Hobbies and Interests/Part-time Employment

Social and Personal Adjustment	**Good**	**Average**	**Poor**
Punctuality			
Attendance			
Appearance			
Self Confidence			
Using Public Transport Unsupervised			
Understanding Verbal Instructions			
Working without Supervision			
Working at Speed			
Initiative			
Asking Advice			
Maturity			
Reliability			
Ability to take Responsibility			
Relationship with Peers			
Relationship with Adults			

Other Comments

Speech/Communication

Other Services interested in the child/family

Are there any other Special Circumstances?

Future Placement
Suitable for: Open Employment
Training leading to Open Employment
Sheltered Employment leading to Open Employment
Sheltered Employment

Head Teachers Comments

For Physically Handicapped Pupils	Yes/No
Would you rate his/her stamina as normal?	
Has the handicap affected school work or is it likely to affect employment?	
Pupil's attitude to his/her handicap	
Should glasses or hearing aid be worn?	
Distance he/she can walk indoors/outdoors	
Can the pupil climb stairs?	
Does he/she require walking aids, wheelchairs, invacar?	
Can the pupil deal with personal needs?	
Any regular medication required?	
Name of pupil's G.P.	
Name of hospital where pupil is a patient	

EPILEPSY

Frequency of attacks: Major/Minor Duration

Attacks during Day/Night/Both

Does the pupil have any warning of an attack?

Treatment being received, drugs etc.

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FEU Publications

Making progress? is one of a number of FEU publications intended to inform teachers and others and to stimulate professional discussion about matters of concern to the Further Education service.

Other FEU 'special needs' documents include:

Students with special needs in FE October 1981
A review of current and completed research relating to young people in the 14–19 age range with special educational needs. The report draws attention to particular research and development needs in this area: more co-ordinated and longitudinal studies are required; less stereotyping; more information on the type of provision that exists in FE for special needs; more curriculum development and supportive dissemination; greater expertise in counselling, guidance and assessment—especially in relation to employment prospects; and finally more support, both for the young people in the form of services and for FE teachers in the form of training.

Stretching the system December 1982
This publication follows up one of the recommendations made in *Students with special needs in FE* that the various organisational and curricular modes of provision for 'special needs' students required investigation. One inescapable conclusion of the document is that the quality of provision is extremely variable; fundamental curricular elements are often given insufficient attention and curriculum development that does exist is more often than not carried out in isolation.

Skills for living December 1982
Suggests a curriculum framework for young people in further education with moderate learning difficulties. Most of the target group will have been at ESN(M) schools but some will have been in mainstream education. The starting point for the curriculum framework described is the principles and some of the content of *A basis for choice* FEU, 1979.

Teaching and learning strategies for FE students with special needs To be published Spring 1983
Suggested guidelines for implementing the curriculum framework outlined in *Skills for Living* concentrating on coping, and drawing on current innovative practice in colleges of FE and training workshops.

Copies of these documents (which are free of charge) are obtainable, while stocks last from the Publications Despatch Centre, Department of Education and Science, Honeypot Lane, Canons Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ (Tel: 01-952-2366 ext 503). A complete list of FEU publications is available from the Publications Despatch Centre.

The FEU also has a number of research projects (RP's) under way related to 'special needs'.

RP 88 Implementing a special needs curriculum in colleges of further education in Derbyshire.

RP 95 Significant living without employment for severely physically handicapped students.

RP 96 Bridging course for ESN school leavers and others.

Details of these projects are available from the FEU, Room 5/89, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH. Tel. No. 01-928 9222 Ext 3307/2410.

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